

THE BEADLE STORY PAPERS, 1870-1897:

A STUDY OF POPULAR FICTION

DISSERTATION

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By

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EDITORIAL NOTE

To facilitate reference to sources often cited in this dissertation, I have used the following abbreviations in footnotes:

Johannsen - Albert Johannsen, The House of Beadle and Adams and Its Dime and Nickel Novels: The Story of a Vanished Literature (Norman, Okla., 1950).

SJ - Saturday Journal, I-XIII, Nos. 1-661 (March 19, 1870-November 11, 1882).

BeW - Beadle's Weekly, I-III, Nos. 1-156 (November 18, 1882-November 7, 1885).

BW - Banner Weekly, IV-XV, Nos. 157-758 (November 14, 1885-May 22, 1897).

CHAPTER ONE

NOTES ON THE STUDY OF POPULAR FICTION;

OR, SUB-LITERATURE FOR FUN AND STUDY

The idea of a "paper for the cultured few"-- of a magazine for the "intellectual classes"-- is all well enough as an idea; but, when these ventures are downright failures, it is ridiculous to lay the blame on the public that wanted something else.

- Saturday Journal, II, No.
98 (January 27, 1872), 4.

It is a matter of simple arithmetic that the wider the appeal of a book, the better its sale. But the mass audience, literate and not necessarily entirely sophisticated, has tastes which are decidedly unintellectual. The writer seeking to please and, hence, succeed with such an audience must determine the best means to provide it with what its tastes demand. Frank L. Mott, in his study of best-selling books in America, has attempted to answer the question, "What is a best seller?"¹ At the end of his discussion, he is forced to admit that no easy general definition is possible because of the "variety of forms, qualities, appeals, and characteristics" that contribute to making any given book a best seller. But in spite of his understandable inability to generalize about such a complex question, and although each of his points needs elaborate qualification before its validity can be established, Mott's list suggests a number of aspects of a best seller, any combination of which can appear in any single work. For the sake of clearness, these characteristics are listed schematically here.

1) The didactic or religious element. Most readers, regardless of their intellectual background, are interested in a story-like representation of moral problems and the solutions to them. Further, religion in whatever form it may appear is a part of everyday life that affects all men of practically all civilizations.

¹Golden Multitudes: The Story of Best Sellers in the United States (New York, 1947), pp. 285-291.

2) Sensationalism. Unusual and exciting episodes have from the earliest epics provided lively entertainment.

3) The self-improvement motif. A common reader who becomes involved in the adventures of fictional or historical characters, perhaps much like himself, delights in the success of the characters and in the betterment of their status. The reader, therefore, admiring and desiring prestige and personal satisfaction, takes example from the tale and, placing himself in the position of the hero, attempts, if only in his dreams, to emulate him.

4) History. Mankind in general is interested in its heritage, and readers delight in having events of nationalistic import dramatized and novelized for them.

5) Adventures of a hero. Closely related to the self-improvement and the historical motifs, this characteristic of a literary work allows a reader to identify himself with the adventurer or provides him with a hero to worship.

6) Vividness. Just as the reader enjoys sensational episodes, he delights in having details presented in such a way that his enjoyment is sensuous or sentimental, and hence less distracting to his enjoyment than a predominantly intellectual point of view would be.

7) Lives and aspirations of common people. Though wealth, status, and the life of the upper classes have always been subjects of fiction, the common-people motif allows the common reader better to identify himself with the wealth to which he aspires and with the domestic virtues attributed to him. This comprehensive motif

attracts the entire mass audience, most of whom belong to the class of "common people."

8) Timeliness. Whereas historical topics bring the common reader close to the heritage of his people or his culture, a current topic is just as likely to attract his attention because of the reader's interest or knowledge outside of his reading.

9) Humor. While the serious side of life is important to all readers, humor provides an entertaining distraction or relief from a possibly depressing concentration upon the less attractive, the less pleasant facets of human existence.

10) Fantasy. The escape into the whimsical or the highly romantic possibilities of human existence allows the reader to forget for a time the pains, worries, and burdens of his own predicament or that of the world immediately about him.

Gilbert Seldes states the function of popular arts more briefly.² All arts give form and meaning to life which might otherwise seem shapeless. The popular arts, however, give all audiences, intellectual and unsophisticated alike, an opportunity to understand more deeply their own lives and the lives of others. They express the spirit of an age or of a people, and thus they create a certain unity of feeling. And while performing these functions, they entertain as well.

Mott's and Seldes' characteristics of popular fiction can be reduced to two essential generalizations. First of all, a best

²The Great Audience (New York, 1951), pp. 250-252.

seller must be entertaining. Whatever lesson it has to teach, whatever truth it has to tell, the best seller must allow the reader to profit with a minimum of intellectual work on his part. Let the best seller instruct, moralize, philosophize as it will, provided it assumes a form that will also divert and entertain the reader. Second, the best seller must approach the level of the common reader by concentrating primarily upon his tastes and interests.

Other scholars who have approached the field of popular literature have based their studies upon postulates and hypotheses such as those outlined here. But why should anyone wish to study a consciously commercial literature which is often so lacking in intrinsic merit as to be actually subliterary?

There are two motives. The first of these is the interest of the literary historian. The masterworks of literary history are timeless in their appeal to a certain few, whether they be scholars, students, or intellectual dilettantes. Such works remain popular, though in a limited sense, long after their own time. But the literature of the masses is largely ephemeral. It meets a need, fills a demand, and then gives way to a new form of the popular arts or to a variation of the same art adjusted to meet the public's altered tastes. It is of historical interest to the literary scholar to recognize and analyze these passing phases of literary history, and to attempt to contribute to the complete literary history of his nation or his culture. Further, analysis of the status of popular literature, its markets, its audience, and its fashions furnishes the literary historian with materials by which he can

judge the economics of the book trade, and in turn at least speculate about the conditions which militate for or against a serious author at any given period.

Because the literature itself is ephemeral, it is essential that the scholar investigate it systematically before the actual materials of his investigation pass permanently out of existence. The earliest systematic study of the type of fiction discussed in this dissertation is Edmund Pearson's Dime Novels.³ more personal than scholarly, but nevertheless a pioneer study of the cheap fiction published in the late nineteenth century by Beadle and Adams and other firms. Pearson emphasizes the historical aspects of dime-novel fiction, telling us primarily what kinds of tales appeared in the many series put out by various firms and illustrating generously with plot summaries. As a pioneer work, Dime Novels has offered suggestions to succeeding researchers in the field. Of the millions of copies of dime novels that once existed only a minuscule fraction remains today. And not all of these are generally available. Probably the largest collection is housed in the New York Public Library.⁴

The materials studied in this dissertation, the story weeklies published by Beadle and Adams, are scarce indeed. There are, of course, spotty collections in various libraries throughout the United States, but Albert Johannsen states that to his knowledge

³Dime Novels; or, Following an Old Trail in Popular Literature (Boston, 1929).

⁴The collection is catalogued in The Beadle Collection of Dime Novels Given to the New York Public Library by Dr. Frank P. O'Brien (New York, 1922).

there are only five complete files of the Beadle story papers in existence, and that only two of these are in public libraries.⁵

The Union List of Serials indicates that these two libraries are the Library of Congress and the Huntington Library. Since Johannsen made his search, however, one of the three private collections has been acquired by the Ohio State University Library;⁶ it is this file which I have used in preparing this dissertation.

The second motive for studying popular literature is closely related to the historical motive. For popular literature can be a guide to both the literary historian and the sociologist wishing to analyze mass culture. In an article entitled "Literature and Covert Culture,"⁷ Bernard Bowron, Leo Marx, and Arnold Rose arrive at an important distinction between what they call overt culture and covert culture. Overt culture, they say, consists of those traits that "most members" of a society would admit they possess as individuals or society possesses as a whole. We might theorize briefly that posterity usually judges the "culture" of a society largely by its contributions to the arts and sciences. But in every society there are also other traits which its members are reluctant to admit they possess. These repressed or ignored

⁵Johannsen, I, 422.

⁶A letter dated February 15, 1958--part of the negotiations between Seven Gables Bookshop, New York, and Professor William Charvat of the English Department of Ohio State University--indicates that the file purchased by the university library was one of the three private collections mentioned by Johannsen.

⁷American Quarterly, IX (Winter 1957), 377-386.

behavior patterns which are "more or less common" to members of a society Bowron, Marx, and Rose designate as "covert culture."

The authors insist that a covert culture is neither more real nor more true than the overt culture of any given society. Nor is a covert culture a complete culture in itself. On the other hand, covert culture should not be thought of as an alienation from overt culture, nor should it be labelled as a sub-culture, that is, a subordinate culture, like a nationality culture, which exists in a larger context of overt culture.

Rather, overt and covert culture exist simultaneously in the same society, and the covert culture is to be found in almost all the members of the society. Bowron, Marx, and Rose, furthermore, offer three conditions under which a covert culture may be said to exist: (1) when a people adhere to inconsistencies in their action; (2) when they resist with emotion any attempts to reconcile action with expressed belief; and (3) when they persist in this behavior over a long period of time.

Bowron, Marx, and Rose, it seems, evolve for their study principles long advocated by critics. G. K. Chesterton, for example, maintained that adverse criticism of popular literature is "one of the strongest examples of the degree to which ordinary life is undervalued." Literature, Chesterton continued, is an intellectual luxury; but fiction, i.e., story-telling, whether literary or not, fulfilling as it does a human need, is a necessity, "the actual centre of a million flaming imaginations."⁸ Merle Curti, writing

⁸G. K. Chesterton, "A Defence of Penny Dreadfuls," The Defendant (London, 1901), pp. 17-28.

specifically of the dime novel, reflects Chesterton's feelings, in stating that

. . . the dime novel, reflecting a much wider range of attitudes and ideas than the ballad and the folk song, is the nearest thing we have had in the country to what is now so much discussed, a true "proletarian" literature, that is, a literature, written for the great masses of people and actually read by them.⁹

Perhaps one of the most obvious ways in which common readers "adhere to inconsistencies in their action" is in their addiction to romance and sentiment in the fiction they read. Herbert Ross Brown, in his extensive study of the American sentimental novel, has succeeded in demonstrating many significant traits of what could be called covert culture.¹⁰ In like manner Geoffrey Wagner has dealt with twentieth-century motion pictures, comic books, pin-up magazines, television programs, and popular crime fiction in order to arrive at conclusions about overt and covert culture which has among its traits an iconographic predilection for brutality and for the female bosom.¹¹ Yet these reader-preferences as they are demonstrated in the mass media Wagner studies are among the traits that contemporary overt culture would condemn, or at least denigrate, as tasteless and immoral.

⁹Merle Curti, "Dime Novels and the American Tradition," Yale Review, XXVI (June 1937), 761-778.

¹⁰The Sentimental Novel in America, 1789-1860 (Durham, N. C., 1940).

¹¹Parade of Pleasure: A Study of Popular Iconography (New York, 1955).

In a somewhat different concern with popular literature as a key to cultural history, Henry Nash Smith has used literary materials to reach conclusions about the American West as a symbol and as a myth.¹² In his study Smith uses popular fiction which because of "the unabashed and systematic use of formulas" becomes subliterary and loses "every vestige of the interest usually sought in works of the imagination." For, subliterary or not, Smith continues,

such work tends to become an objectified mass dream, like the moving pictures, the soap operas, or the comic books that are the present-day equivalents of the Beadle stories. The individual writer abandons his own personality and identifies himself with the reveries of his readers. It is the presumably close fidelity of the Beadle stories to the dream life of a vast inarticulate public that renders them valuable to the social historian and the historian of ideas.¹³

To see how the Beadle story weeklies help objectify a mass dream and how they represent the habits and mores of "a vast inarticulate public" is the object of this dissertation.

¹²Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth (Cambridge, Mass., 1950).

¹³Ibid., pp. 91-92.

CHAPTER TWO

HIGHLIGHTS OF STORY-PAPER HISTORY:

OR, RIVALS FOR A FORTUNE IN PULP

Our paper will be "popular in form and size, popular in price, and popular in character"--like all our publications, THOROUGHLY GOOD..

- Saturday Journal, I,
No. 1 (March 19, 1870),
4.

This chapter does not presume to do more than summarize the highlights of story-paper history. There are available several commendable detailed general accounts of this genre as well as closer studies of individual publishing companies and their papers. As a basic source, Frank L. Mott's A History of American Magazines¹ provides scattered comment on many story papers. In addition, Mott's studies of individual periodicals include excellent brief analyses of Robert Bonner's Ledger² and the Saturday Evening Post.³

The only detailed history concentrating on the story paper is Mary Noel's Villains Galore. Unfortunately the more available published form of her study is utterly devoid of documentation and lacks even a bibliography. Miss Noel's study is authoritative and often presents facts and figures of story-paper history that were unknown before she delved into her wealth of research material. She had at her disposal not only the large collection of story papers in the Library of Congress, but also the unique Bonner papers, including letters to and from authors and company records, housed in the Manuscript Division of the New York Public Library. The original doctoral thesis carefully documents the special material.⁴

¹Frank L. Mott, A History of American Magazines, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1930-1957).

²Ibid., II, 356-363.

³Ibid., IV, 671-716.

⁴Mary Noel, Villains Galore: The Heyday of the Popular Story Weekly (New York, 1954). The Heyday of the Popular Story Weekly, (Dissertation, Columbia University, 1952).

The best source for the history of those story papers published by Erastus Beadle, David Adams, and William Adams is Albert Johannsen's The House of Beadle and Adams and Its Dime and Nickel Novels.⁵ Studying any Beadle publication would be most arduous were it not for Johannsen's mine of source material. A geologist by profession, Johannsen collected dime novels as a hobby. In 1933 he conceived the idea of preparing a bibliography of the publications of Beadle and Adams; but he soon discovered that the research problems involved in his task precluded the possibility of any simple bibliography. For seventeen years Johannsen pursued names hidden behind pseudonyms, dug up obscure facts about the members of the firm and about the second-rate authors who wrote for it, and prepared cross references for stories reprinted under new titles or with altered texts. The result was a two-volume monument that includes a complete bibliography of each of the forty-one "libraries" published by Beadle and Adams during its thirty-eight year history. Johannsen's work also includes bibliographies of all Beadle and Adams household handbooks, songbooks, periodicals, and miscellaneous publications, complete with full cross references to reprints and a brief resumé of the plot of each novel in the various libraries and of each serial in the periodicals. This basic bibliographical material is supplemented with a detailed history of the publishing house, a biographical dictionary of Beadle authors, an additional bibliography of newspaper and magazine articles dealing with dime novels, their authors, and dime-novel

⁵Albert Johannsen, The House of Beadle and Adams and Its Dime and Nickel Novels: The Story of a Vanished Literature, 2 vols. (Norman, Okla., 1950).

collectors, and two special indexes of titles and subtitles and of localities and characters. All in all, The House of Beadle and Adams is an indispensable aid to any student of nineteenth-century American popular fiction.

I. Pre-Civil War Story Papers

Perhaps the reason Mary Noel never bothers to frame an explicit definition of a "story paper" is that it is so easy to define one. The briefest definition possible seems to be: a large-sheet, eight-page, weekly publication devoted entirely or at least primarily to popular short stories, poetry, and serialized novels. If we use this as our broad, and therefore inclusive, designation of the type of publication we are discussing throughout this study, we encounter our first difficulty in trying to establish when such papers began. The difficulty lies mainly in the fact that most periodicals of the first half of the nineteenth century included some fiction. True, only a few of these were weeklies. But whatever the periodicity of publication, whether annual (*i.e.*, the gift book), quarterly, monthly, or weekly, prevailing practice made magazines of those years anthologies of appropriated or donated material. Many magazines, operating on shoestring capital and unable to buy material and depending entirely on free contributions, borrowed from other periodicals. Mott points out that the first volume of the American Museum (1787) appropriated seven British pamphlets in their entirety.⁶ The

⁶Mott, op. cit., I, 39-40.

practice of "piracy" was easy to condone because even according to the American copyright law of 1790 there was nothing illegal about importing, reprinting, or selling within the United States anything written, printed, or published in foreign parts by any person not a citizen of the United States.

Understandably, as the number of periodicals increased, piracy increased also. Moreover, since American publications had no copyright protection in England, or anywhere else, the practice was reciprocated by English periodicals. For example, the first number of the London Ladies' Cabinet (1832) reprinted without credit nine articles from the Knickerbocker. Two of these articles, we might add, were later reprinted in America with credits ascribing them to the Cabinet.⁷ One more example will suffice: Bentley's Miscellany for August 1840 included without the author's name or a credit for its source, Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher" which had first appeared in Burton's Gentleman's Magazine for September 1839. Burton, editor of Gentleman's, was proud of the fact that articles in his first few issues reprinted in England were re-pirated to the United States, for this practice, he felt, only proved the merit of the articles so treated.⁸

Furthermore, some American periodicals were pirates by intention and were founded on a basis of piracy. Among weeklies, one such magazine was The Albion (1822-1875), probably the longest lived

⁷"Editor's Table," Knickerbocker, VIII (July 1836), 119-120.

⁸Mott, op. cit., I, 392-393, 676.

nineteenth-century weekly pirate. Contents of The Albion, which about 1850 circulated some 15,000 copies weekly, were aimed at the British element of American population, and the magazine was, therefore, a collection of news articles, announcements, and vital statistics culled from British papers and magazines. As for fiction, it was the policy of The Albion to present

the most amusing and agreeable Tales of the British Periodicals, which are so remarkable for their lively and sparkling talent, selected with a diligence and care that has drawn forth the most unqualified approbation.⁹

In addition, The Albion reprinted in serial form novels by Dickens, Marryat, Lever and others, copying either from installments appearing in British magazines or from complete editions newly arrived in the United States.

Lest it be objected that The Albion presents a special case, inasmuch as the Anglophile or English-bred audience at which it was aimed was most interested in British publications, we must recall that other American periodicals pirated material simply because it was good business. Some magazines went so far as to reflect their purpose in their names. Nathaniel Parker Willis and Dr. T. O. Porter projected in 1838 a new magazine to be called The Pirate. Actually the title of the magazine was the no less indicative Cor-sair. Though the periodical itself had but a brief existence during 1839 and 1840, its explicit purpose serves as an example of American

⁹The Albion, 2nd Ser., I (November 16, 1833), 368.

piratical practice. In a letter to Porter, Willis enunciates his aims; the magazine was

to take advantage . . . of the privilege assured to us by our piratical law of copyright; and in the name of American authors (for our own benefit) "convey" to our columns, for the amusement of our readers, the cream and spirit of everything that ventures to light in England, France and Germany. As to original American productions, we shall, as the publishers do, take what we can get for nothing (that is good), holding, as the publishers do, that while we can get Boz and Bulwer for a thank-ye or less, it is not pocketwise to pay much for Halleck and Irving.¹⁰

It has always been an axiom of sound business that one does not buy something if he can obtain equally good quality for nothing. But between 1825 and 1840 American life changed in several important ways that prompted smart businessmen to work according to two other axioms: exploit every market; and, demand creates supply. During that time the factory movement led gradually to urbanization. Urbanization, moreover, was one of the causal forces of compulsory education that made millions literate if not sophisticated. Educated, literate masses, naturally, amounted to millions of potential readers. In the 1830's and 1840's publishers already reduced expenses by converting to the new, efficient steam presses. Furthermore, American publishers were not bothered with stamp taxes or advertising taxes that militated against a cheap press in England. On the contrary, American postal laws encouraged the cheap press. There were special postal rates for newspapers or anything that appeared in a newspaper format. Moreover, the postman himself served as a literary agent,

¹⁰Quoted in Henry A. Beers, Nathaniel Parker Willis (Boston, 1885), p. 240.

collecting subscription money and franking it through the mails. The advent of railroad transportation further aided the establishment of newsstands in cities far removed from New York, Philadelphia, Boston, or Cincinnati, the centers of publishing. The conditions were favorable for publishers, and the literate masses formed a market to exploit.¹¹ Publishers also began to realize that if writing for the masses was profitable, there would be in no time more than enough authors to keep publishers busy. Not that authors were to be well paid for their work; often they were not paid at all. Instead authors were often expected to enter contests and earn their pay by being chosen best of the lot.

One of the first publications to qualify as a story paper was Philadelphia Saturday Courier (1831-1856). This weekly secured original material by holding several contests and offering a cash prize for the best story submitted. The contest rules, however, were devious. The Courier was bound to reveal the name of the winner only. Other stories were not returned unless applied for; nor was the Courier bound to reveal the names of the losers. By means of such contests, the Courier and other periodicals were supplied with many usable stories for the price of one.¹²

One of the competitors of the Courier was the Saturday Evening Post. But the Post was unable to afford contests like the Courier's. Since its beginning in 1821 the Post had been a four-page collection

¹¹Noel, op. cit., pp. 1-7, summarizes these developments.

¹²Ibid., pp. 8-11.

of borrowings: articles, brief news items, and some tales. In 1822 it claimed a circulation of a thousand; by 1824 it claimed three to four thousand.¹³ But though the Post managed to stay alive, it could not match the 32,000 circulation claimed by the Courier in the late thirties.¹⁴ Not until Henry Peterson became editor in 1849 did the situation change. By paying contributors like Edna D. E. N. Southworth, Grace Greenwood, Fanny Fern, Ann S. Stephens, and Timothy Shay Arthur, Peterson ended the Post's practice of borrowing material. During Peterson's regime the Post surpassed the now faltering Courier. In 1855 it claimed a circulation of eighty to ninety thousand.¹⁵ After Peterson's retirement in 1873, the Post declined, largely because the new management cheapened the content by printing the work of unknowns. Not until after Cyrus Curtis bought the Post in 1897 did the publication begin its climb to the popularity it enjoys today.

The most famous and most important of all story papers was the New York Ledger (1844-1903), originally known as the Merchant's Ledger. In its pre-Bonner years the paper concentrated upon market news and filled out its pages with stories and poetry. But when in 1851 Robert Bonner, a former printer's apprentice and proofreader, purchased the Ledger for \$900, there began an era climaxed when the

¹³Saturday Evening Post, I (July 27, 1822), 3; IV (December 4, 1824), 3.

¹⁴Noel, op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁵Saturday Evening Post, XXXV (December 13, 1855), 391. Also see Mott, op. cit., IV, 671-716, passim.

Ledger became the most widely circulated and the most widely imitated of all story papers.¹⁶ From the first appearance of the Ledger as a story paper in March of 1856, Bonner commanded the best-known names in the business. Among his writers were Sylvanus Cobb and Mrs. Southworth, both of whom he won from the Saturday Evening Post, and Mary Jane Holmes who had written for the Weekly. Bonner also initiated the practice of negotiating exclusive contracts with his important contributors, thereby cornering, at least in theory, the production of the writers most likely to command public attention.

The secret of Bonner's success was two-fold. First of all, he was willing to pay top prices for the work of the "big-name" authors. J. C. Derby, a contemporary advertising agent, ascribed the rise of the Ledger to "the far-sighted sagacity of its projector and proprietor, his untiring energy and his novel method of advertising."¹⁷ Bonner's advertising methods formed the second part of his secret. For in advertising, also, Bonner was willing and able to pay for results. Derby states that between 1856 and 1884 Bonner paid "about a million of dollars" to S. M. Pettingill & Co. of Philadelphia to advertise the Ledger.¹⁸ Another set of estimates has Bonner spending as much as \$2,000 for a single advertisement in the Herald, \$27,000 a week, and \$150,000 a year.¹⁹ Bonner's theory of advertising rested

¹⁶Mott, op. cit., II, 357. See also Ralph Admari, "Bonner and 'The Ledger,'" The American Book Collector, VI (May-June 1935), 176-193.

¹⁷J. C. Derby, Fifty Years among Authors, Books, and Publishers (New York, 1884), p. 204.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 201.

¹⁹Frederic Hudson, Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872 (New York, 1873), p. 649.

upon the postulate that one cannot avoid reading what he cannot avoid noticing. The advertisements themselves usually assumed one of three forms. Sometimes Bonner bought an entire page of an important daily, such as the Herald; the advertising squib occupied only a few lines in the center of the page, the remaining space being an eye-catching, blank whiteness. On other occasions he bought several columns and filled the space with "iteration copy," a brief two or three-line squib repeated verbatim through the length of the entire advertisement. Perhaps Bonner's most enticing form of advertising was the closely printed page of two or three chapters from the new Ledger serial. The excerpt was generous enough to give a reader a good idea of what to expect of the whole but not enough to satisfy his curiosity fully. The "installment" ended with a recommendation that the reader purchase the Ledger to see how the tale evolved.²⁰

The Ledger also set standards of morality that no respectable competing paper could afford to belittle. Upon his retirement in 1888, Bonner was said to have imagined his typical reader as "an old lady in Westchester" with three daughters about twenty, sixteen, and twelve. He imagined also that after coming home from prayer meeting, the mother spent the evening reading to the girls from the Ledger. Never, said Bonner, was there one line in the Ledger that she could not read to her girls.²¹ Throughout the period of his proprietorship,

²⁰Examples of Bonner's advertising are found in Noel, op. cit., p. 204.

²¹Quoted in Current Literature, I (September 1888), 196.

Bonner rigidly controlled its content. Obvious improprieties, those apparent to all conservatives, were vigorously tabooed. Bonner's letters furnish an example of his chastising an erring author. He had occasion in 1884 to write Sylvanus Cobb that the Ledger would never print "anything about masters having illegitimate children by their slaves, nor anything about illegitimate children." Further, Bonner continued, "I will not print anything in the Ledger that I cannot read aloud to my children."²²

For all of Bonner's spectacular advertising, the Ledger itself carried no advertising throughout the years he controlled the paper. But business boomed for him. Because of the Ledger policy against accepting advertising, the standard newspaper directories, published for the benefit of advertisers, omitted circulation figures for the biggest seller of them all. Consequently, we must rely upon Bonner's own claims for information about the circulation of the Ledger. Even when we grant a certain inflation of figures, the claimed 400,000 during the late sixties and throughout the seventies placed the Ledger far ahead of any rival.²³ After Bonner's retirement in 1888 the Ledger declined. By the nineties, when it was accepting mail-order advertisements, its circulation had fallen below 200,000. But in his heyday Bonner's methods brought him wealth, and wise investment increased his riches. In 1868 a New York Herald report of high incomes

²²Letter from Bonner to Sylvanus Cobb quoted in Noel, op. cit., p. 93.

²³Mott, op. cit., II, 356-363, passim.

listed Bonner's as \$238,411, a figure surpassed in the New York district only by Moses Taylor, president of the City Bank and railroad investor. In the same year Bonner built a debt-free, five-story, marble-faced office building to house his prosperous public favorite.²⁴

As a paragon among story weeklies, the Ledger was, of course, widely imitated. Its eight pages were large sheets, 21 1/4 x 14 1/4 inches. Each page consisted of five columns of closely spaced but still attractive print, broken up by three or four engravings, one of them always at the top center of page one. Among the early imitators of Ledger appearance and advertising method was the New York Weekly (1856-1914), begun by Amos Williamson as the Weekly Dispatch.²⁵ But the Weekly made little headway in the fifties against the high-flying Ledger; by 1859 Williamson was ready to give up his story paper. Noel theorizes that Williamson planned to turn his subscription list over to Bonner; for the Weekly of April 23, 1859, included a three-column-wide portrait of Bonner, accompanied by a glowing biography. Whether or not Williamson ever did plan to sell out to the Ledger, the ironic aftermath began a new era of story-paper history.

²⁴Noel, op. cit., p. 57.

²⁵The rise of the Weekly is related in detail in Quentin Reynolds, The Fiction Factory; or, From Pulp Row to Quality Street. The Story of 100 Years of Publishing at Street & Smith (New York, 1955), pp. 3-98.

Williamson sold the Weekly in 1859, not to Bonner but to Francis S. Street and Francis S. Smith, two impecunious young men who paid off the \$40,000 mortgage on their purchase within five years. Smith became immediately a regular contributor to his own paper. Soon the new proprietors secured the exclusive services of Mary J. Holmes, and by 1871 they could claim Ned Buntline and May Agnes Fleming as well. Under Street and Smith, moreover, the Weekly originated a striking policy of illustrating serials. When a new serial began, the Weekly carried on its front page a large picture covering the entire width and at least half the length of the page. The practice soon became standard for all other story papers except the staid Ledger, which consistently carried the usual smaller four- or five-inch cut.

The challenge the Weekly presented to the Ledger is undeniable. In the early seventies Street and Smith boasted precise figures attested to by their distributor, the American News Company, reaching as high as 350,000 in 1877.²⁶ The newspaper directories, however, never assigned it a figure over 300,000. Whether or not the Ledger circulation figure of 400,000 is padded, the Weekly, judging by the directory figures, was its equal in the race. Nevertheless, in the late seventies, circulation of the Weekly declined. During the eighties and nineties its figures hovered around 100,000.

²⁶Appendix A, infra, is devoted to a listing of the circulations of selected story papers and other selected weeklies.

II. The Post-War Rush

Perhaps one of the main reasons for a decline in the circulations of papers like the Ledger and the Weekly was the number of rivals that sprouted after the Civil War. Mott suggests that post-war expansion in the publishing world was due to good economic conditions, improvements in the presses, the development of stereotyping and engraving, and the general spirit of optimism that pervaded the North. Mott estimates that there were 700 periodicals in 1865; the figure ballooned to over 1,200 by 1870; over 2,400 by 1880; and some 3,300 in 1885.²⁷

The post-war sixties saw the beginnings of three additional significant names among story papers: Saturday Night (1865-1902), Frank Leslie's Chimney Corner (1865-1885), and the Fireside Companion (1867-1903). The proprietors of Saturday Night, James Elverson and Robert Davis, began their weekly in Philadelphia as a reform paper. The political sections, however, soon gave way to the profitable pieces of fiction that formed the backbone of any story paper. By 1867 Saturday Night enjoyed a national circulation; circulation claims were highest in 1872 when C. A. Cook & Co. in its United States Newspaper Directory granted the weekly a figure of 220,000. Thereafter, the circulation of Saturday Night diminished, though only in 1876 did its rating in the advertising directories fall below 100,000. Until the middle seventies the Weekly and Saturday Night considered each other arch rivals; apparently the management of both decided that the Ledger was beyond competition. Saturday Night was frankly

²⁷Mott, op. cit., III, 5.

imitative; Noel, in fact, states that it was the "least original" of all the story papers she studied. Yet Saturday Night seemed to delight in prodding the Weekly with advice about how the Weekly might profit by carefully imitating its Philadelphia rival and, of course, the Ledger. Among his authors Elverson could number only few big-name regular contributors. May Agnes Fleming was on exclusive contract from 1868, but in 1871 she shifted to the Weekly. Elverson did manage to print some early Southworth, while she was under exclusive contract to the Ledger; but his attempt to win her from the Ledger was unsuccessful. Actually, Saturday Night had only one prolific mainstay: Edward Ellis, whose Seth Jones (1860) was one of the best-selling numbers in Beadle and Adams' early Dime Novel series. In the end Elverson relied on his own group of writers, most of them generally unknown even in their own time.²⁸ Business was good enough, however, to warrant Elverson's launching a new publication, Golden Days (1880-1907), a weekly story paper for children.

Frank Leslie's Chimney Corner (1865-1885) was not, to judge by its format, in the general class of story papers. Weeklies of the Ledger type appeared in eight large pages and sold, before the seventies, for five cents, six cents thereafter. The Chimney Corner, on the other hand, cost ten cents. In addition, its sixteen pages were smaller and were stitched together. More than other story

²⁸The rise of Saturday Night is summarized in Noel, op. cit., pp. 115-120.

weeklies, it stressed large pictures on almost every page. Serials took up less than half the space, and none of them were contributed by the big-name writers. Leslie also selected American novels whose copyrights had expired or English novels that could be reprinted without royalty or any other payment. The remainder of the weekly was devoted to short biographies, travel articles, or articles on the customs and manners of peoples abroad.²⁹ Were it not for the appearance of the Chimney Corner during the post-war story paper rush, there would be little cause to mention it. The weekly afforded small competition to the best sellers. Its circulation was highest in 1871 and 1872 when Rowell's American Newspaper Directory gave it a rating of 88,000. After that the number dropped swiftly; between 1874 and 1877 Leslie did not even release a statement to the directories. By 1885, the last year of the Chimney Corner, the most generous directory figure allotted it a circulation of 25,000.

In 1866 George Munro left his job as a bundler for Beadle and Adams and began a publishing house of his own. At first he specialized in dime books, but in 1867, when he introduced the Fireside Companion (1867-1903), Munro became the first of the dime-book publishers to join the story weekly race. Munro's authors were not well known in the field; indeed, he relied on pirating a fair share of his material, even going so far as to serialize Collins' Woman in White, which was available in cheap reprint editions. The Fireside Companion was saved from an early demise when in 1872 Munro discovered

²⁹Noel, op. cit., p. 100. I have been unable to see copies of the Chimney Corner.

a new money-maker for his house in the person of the detective hero Old Sleuth. Circulation mounted as Sleuth novels rapidly succeeded each other. In the mid-eighties, when Munro was running two and even three Old Sleuth tales at once, the directories estimated its circulation at 275,000, the apex of appeal of the Fireside Companion.³⁰

George Munro's stiffest competition came from his own brother Norman, who in 1873 inaugurated his Family Story Paper (1873-1921). The Munro brothers seem to have been feuding constantly. One recurrent difficulty was the similarity in the names of the rival firms. Norman twice filed suit to restrain George from capitalizing upon the name "Munro Publishing Company." Further, George had introduced in the Fireside Companion the practice of serializing novels based on leading stage plays and representing them as adapted by the original author himself. Norman followed the same practice in the Family Story Paper. Later, when the Fireside Companion began to win new readers with Old Sleuth, the Family Story Paper fought back with its rival detective, Old Cap Collier.³¹ Both papers were among the longer-lived story weeklies. In the late eighties and throughout the nineties, when story-paper circulations were generally declining, the Munro brothers kept their papers at the top, maintaining circulations of 150,000 or better. It is significant, however, that of the few papers like the Ledger, which were trying to hold the line

³⁰Noel, op. cit., pp. 122-124.

³¹An account of the beginnings of the Family Story Paper and of the rivalry between the Munro brothers is found in Noel, op. cit., pp. 124-129.

against admitting advertising to their pages, the Family Story Paper in 1884 was the first important one to yield.

These were the big names--Bonner, Street and Smith, Elverson, the Munro brothers--that shaped story-paper history up to approximately 1870. But the development of story weeklies is paralleled in part by the rise of another branch of cheap publishing, the dime books. At first these two branches apparently represented no threat to each other. Both were exploiting a rich and eager market. In fact, throughout the heyday of the story paper, publishers who dealt also in dime books thought little of republishing in a "library" series a novel that had originally appeared in a story paper, even if the serialized version clearly stated that the tale would not be reprinted in any other library. The Munro brothers were no exceptions. Old Sleuth and Old Cap Collier, for example, appeared both in serialized form and in libraries devoted entirely to their exploits. But the name most associated with dime books as well as with story-paper history is that of Beadle and Adams.

III. Beadle and Adams and the Beadle Story Weekly

The first publication of Beadle & Vanduzee, a struggling stereotype foundry located in Buffalo, was a periodical, The Youth's Casket (1852-1857), a small, sixteen-page monthly which sold for six cents a copy or fifty cents a year.³² The Casket, plainly aimed at

³²The Beadle periodicals are fully described in Johannsen, I, 414-476.

a juvenile audience, contained original short pieces of prose and poetry. When the Casket was merged with Forrester's Magazine of Boston, the firm, already known then as Beadle and Adams, announced that the Casket was to be discontinued after the December, 1857, issue because of the time demanded by another enterprise, The Home (1856-1860).³³ That the sister monthly was aimed at a wider, though exclusively feminine audience, is clear by its subtitle: A Fireside Monthly Companion and Guide for the Wife, the Mother, the Sister, and the Daughter. The Home was, like the Casket, a small magazine, each number containing some fifty-four pages. It sold for fifteen cents a copy or \$1.50 a year. The magazine was generously illustrated with woodcuts and engravings which Johannsen has established were obtained from other publications like Godey's Lady Book and the Ladies' Repository.³⁴ Usually the articles and stories that appeared in The Home were brief. There were, for example, only six serial stories in the four-and-one-half-year span of its publication. But after 1858, when the publishing firm moved to New York, Beadle and Adams devoted more time to its various dime libraries, the company's newest enterprise. The Beadle series of songbooks and domestic handbooks which began to appear early in 1859 were soon supplemented by dime speakers and dime dialogues. By June, 1860, the semi-monthly "Dime Novels" began a long line of fiction libraries. Consequently, The Home became the neglected

³³The Youth's Casket, VI (December 1857), 287.

³⁴Johannsen, I, 418.

member of the Beadle organization, and in June, 1860, the publishers withdrew the magazine in order to give more time to their dime publications.

Beadle and Adams' next experiment in magazine publication was, according to Johannsen, the "highest class" magazine attempted by the firm. Beadle's Monthly (1866-1867) was a ninety-eight-page octavo that probably was intended to compete with Harper's Monthly. Beadle's, indeed, looked like Harper's and other periodicals of that class. The double-column pages were profusely illustrated; there was an attempted balance between poetry, stories, and historical, biographical, and travel articles. But Beadle's Monthly lasted only eighteen months. Johannsen speculates on the reasons behind its early demise. But whether the publisher is to be blamed for not having the energy to build a subscription list or the tenacity to suffer the difficult days of a new magazine; or whether the public, as Mott suggests, is to blame for not accepting a quality magazine from a publisher generally associated with cheap products--whatever the cause, Beadle's Monthly died silently and without explanation.³⁵

During the 1870's Beadle and Adams launched four story papers, three of them abortive attempts to please a limited audience. The first of the failures was Belles and Beaux (1874), a sixteen-page weekly priced at ten cents, twice the size but also nearly twice the price of its successful competitors. It aimed exclusively at

³⁵Johannsen, I, 421; Mott, op. cit., II, 468.

younger readers, probably between the early teens and the early twenties. Poetry, short stories, and serials were all on love themes, and probably the material failed to appeal to a sufficiently wide audience, especially among males, to warrant continuing the weekly.³⁶ Belles and Beaux expired on April 25, 1874, after only thirteen numbers. For over a year after this date, however, Beadle and Adams featured in the Saturday Journal a section entitled "Belles and Beaux."³⁷ The column continued the emphasis of the defunct weekly: love poetry, advice to women on manners, dress, adornment, and morals. A second failure, Girls of Today, appeared briefly between December 4, 1875, and May 26, 1876. In its twenty-fifth number the paper, which was devoted entirely to a young female audience, announced that it was ceasing publication.³⁸ Subscribers received the Saturday Journal, but Girls of Today died for good. There was no continuation of its features in the Journal. The final brief attempt by Beadle and Adams to publish a story weekly was The Young New Yorker which appeared between November 25, 1878, and May 17, 1879. This paper, intended to appeal to teen-aged boys, concentrated on sports. But perhaps The Young New Yorker devoted itself too much to sports at the expense of variety. The paper lasted for only twenty-six numbers; at its demise unfinished stories

³⁶Johannsen, I, 468.

³⁷SJ, V, No. 217-VI, No. 283 (May 9, 1874-August 14, 1875).

³⁸Johannsen, I, 470.

were carried to completion in the Saturday Journal, and the Journal made a practice of carrying a brief article of baseball news.³⁹

Beadle and Adams' only successful venture at publishing a story paper was the Saturday Journal (1870-1882) and its successors, Beadle's Weekly (1882-1885) and Banner Weekly (1885-1897). The three are in effect one paper with three names. In addition, the Journal underwent several minor changes of title; but the only near-essential alteration of the basic title was the Star Journal used by Beadle and Adams between January 4, 1879, and February 28, 1880. The weekly, presented "in answer to . . . imperative demand," was to be "popular in form and size, popular in price, and popular in character." In addition, the first number stated the publisher's high ambitions.

All that we do will be well done. No publication can pass from our hands except in its best condition. "Incomparable in excellence--unapproachable in price" was our motto, adopted years ago, not in pretence but in earnest. How we have fulfilled the promise let our standing with the trade and public attest.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the weekly was to be "spirited in general character, vigorous and healthy in tone, and thoroughly original in its quality." The paper was to appeal to a wide audience, "old and young, male and female." But the biggest claim the new Journal made for itself in the first number was that it would not "tire readers with interminable stories." The prospectus promised that, unlike novels in other papers,

³⁹Johannsen, I, 473.

⁴⁰SJ, I, No. 1 (March 19, 1870), 4.

Journal serials would be printed in long installments and be completed in two or three months. Four years later, the firm could state on the editorial page that the Journal was successful largely because it never attempted to be a political, philosophical, financial, or reform organ. "Its mission," on the other hand, "is the less pretentious one of making its audience happy."⁴¹

It was only good business that Beadle and Adams copied the better features of its competitors and boasted that it never succumbed to such reprehensible practices as piracy. The first nine numbers of the Saturday Journal, 12 x 16 inches, were smaller than the ordinary story paper, but the editor insisted that size had little to do with value. On the contrary, the Journal claimed that some unnamed larger sheets resorted to filling their columns with reprinted matter. But the Journal with its smaller column area guaranteed readers completely original material, "entirely American."⁴² The Journal made quite a virtue of the fact that its authors and stories were exclusively American. Apparently Beadle and Adams by making this claim intended to appeal to the good will of both readers and writers. More than once the editor commented that American authors, because they must be paid for their work, were excluded from some American publications in favor of English authors. The badly treated American writer finds a market, the claim continues, in "the great popular weeklies," where "he confronts a vast audience,

⁴¹SJ, V, No. 243 (November 7, 1874), 4.

⁴²SJ, I, No. 3 (April 2, 1870), 4.

and by this means assists much to undo the mischief of a foreign or imported literature."⁴³

The first major change in the Journal came with number ten. All claims about the advantages of a smaller sheet were forgotten, it seems, when it was announced that the publishers

. . . having, from the incipency of their project of a paper for the people, had in view the ultimate of a sheet of the full size of The New York Ledger, to be sold at the popular price of five cents, have been so gratified with the hitherto success of the Saturday Journal, as to place it, at once, upon its enlarged basis.⁴⁴

Thus, while it abhorred copying the practice of piracy indulged by other papers, the Journal assumed the dignified appearance of its arch rival. Like the front page of the Ledger, the first page of the Journal was graced with a single cut covering the upper area of the middle columns. The Journal also copied the practice of the Weekly by introducing a new serial with a cut taking up at least half the front page.

The Rowell directory for 1871 estimated the Journal circulation at 35,000, a good figure considering that the paper was only a year old. But it lagged far behind the big names in the trade. Even the Chimney Corner was given a rating of 88,000 that year. Nevertheless, the Journal boasted on its first anniversary that "no paper achieved a more rapid success, or a more enviable reputation,

⁴³SJ, II, No. 83 (October 14, 1871), 4.

⁴⁴SJ, I, No. 9 (May 14, 1870), 68.

in so brief a period."⁴⁵ In July, 1871, the Journal was sure enough of its position to cite an article about popular weeklies which appeared in "an Indiana paper": " . . . since . . . people will read fiction," the paper is quoted, "do let them get the best and try to avoid what is sensational, maudlin, or impure." The editor of the unnamed Indiana paper, according to the Journal, then listed the four best story papers "in order of merit." The Ledger was first, as anyone might have expected. But the Saturday Journal was placed second, ahead of Saturday Night and the Weekly. Yet the year-old Journal took umbrage at being awarded only second place. The Beadle editorial continued:

If this editor had compared not one but several successive issues of the Saturday Journal with the paper which he places first on his list, it is our opinion that he would have awarded our paper the first position. That no popular journal published in America is so carefully edited, and so keenly alive to the claims of the reading public for what is absolutely the BEST in fiction and story as the Saturday Journal, is the verdict of those best qualified to judge; and the rapid progress of the Journal is proof that the great reading public is discriminating and intelligent in its choice.⁴⁶

In its early days the Journal attempted to appeal to the entire family audience. The editorial pages of the first volume addressed themselves to women as well as to men and boys. Mothers were advised to kiss their children, no matter where they might be going, for each kiss might be the last.⁴⁷ Old maids were admonished not to fear a

⁴⁵SJ, I, No. 52 (March 11, 1871), 4.

⁴⁶SJ, II, No. 68 (July 1, 1871), 4.

⁴⁷SJ, I, No. 15 (June 25, 1870), 4.

life of spinsterhood.⁴⁸ Boys and girls alike were warned against impulsive migration to the big cities where evil influences tend to destroy impressionable youth. Young girls were advised to "beware of every person, of every influence that lowers the standard of your moral beauty or trifles with the convictions of your purest soul."⁴⁹ Later, women readers were attracted by a feature column, "The Woman's World," which lasted for three years.⁵⁰ But young boys were from the first the special target of Journal didacticism. They were warned that liquor shortened life. And time and again they were told of the evils of smoking. Boys were warned that the tobacco habit leads to bad companions and barrooms, gives offense to ladies, sets bad example for other youth, and leads to diseased lungs, heart, and nerves. The last result was vigorously documented by the findings of "a French physician" who examined thirty-eight boy smokers between nine and fifteen years of age and found twenty-seven with nicotine poisoning; twenty-two with "serious disorders of the circulation, indigestion, dullness of intellect, and a marked appetite for strong drinks"; three with "heart affection"; eight with "decided deterioration of blood"; twelve who suffered "frequent epistaxis"; ten who suffered "disturbed sleep"; and four with "ulceration of the mucous membrane of

⁴⁸SJ, I, No. 4 (April 9, 1870), 28.

⁴⁹SJ, V, No. 226 (July 11, 1874), 4.

⁵⁰SJ, III, No. 130-VI, No. 282 (September 7, 1872-August 7, 1875).

the mouth." The frightening list concluded with the exhortation: "Oh, be wise in time, and let the tobacco leaf never soil your lips!"⁵¹

By 1875 the Journal was aiming even more specifically at boy readers. The prospectus for 1876 claimed, " . . . we may quite consistently aver that, for the Best Boys' Serials and the Romance of Adventure, those seeking them--old boys and young--will have to look to the New York Saturday Journal." In the same article, however, the Journal attempted to maintain its appeal to all readers by claiming, " . . . we print in our columns, every year, more first-class serials for general readers than any other paper."⁵² Two years later the Journal admitted that many of its serials "appeal more directly to our young men and boy readers"; nevertheless, the "thousands of readers with different tastes have in our serials, sketches, and miscellaneous reading all they can desire."⁵³ No one would deny that new feature series like "The Men of '76" were directed primarily to male readers.⁵⁴ But despite the increase of western fiction in 1875 and 1876, the women readers were not altogether neglected. True, "The Woman's World" gave way to the more generally interesting "Topics of the Time." But brief articles of admonition continued to be addressed to girls and women as well as to boys and men. Feature series, too, were introduced to appeal to

⁵¹SJ, II, No. 85 (October 28, 1871), 4.

⁵²SJ, VI, No. 301 (December 18, 1875), 4.

⁵³SJ, VIII, No. 405 (December 15, 1877), 4.

⁵⁴SJ, VI, No. 310-VII, No. 341 (February 19-September 23, 1876).

feminine readers. Sketches entitled "Typical Women," for example, treated readers to biographical highlights of such a diverse company as Cleopatra, Elizabeth I, Frances Kemble, Jenny Lind, and Fanny Fern.⁵⁵ In addition, there appeared a weekly column of answers to correspondents. The feature served to give notice of contributions accepted and declined, but the greater portion of the column comprised answers to questions of historical fact, etiquette, and affairs of the heart. Young men and young women were encouraged to inquire on any subject: "Love, Courtship, and Marriage--Etiquette and Usages of Good Society--Personal Wants and Interests--Home and House Affairs--Matters of Special or Individual Concern--Fashion and Society--General Information, etc., etc."⁵⁶

However, it became clear during the later years of the Journal that Beadle and Adams was relying urgently upon appeal to boy readers. Two feature series introduced during 1880 will serve to indicate this shift. "Talked About People" featured biographical notes about famous personalities, almost all of whom were men. Only Clara Kellogg and Metta Victor were feminine subjects among a male company that included P. T. Barnum, Cyrus Field, Allan Pinkerton, Edwin Booth, Cardinal McCloskey, Alfred S. Barnes, and Charles Tiffany.⁵⁷ The second series, "Our Naval School; or, Life Among the Middies,"

⁵⁵SJ, IX, Nos. 418-445 (March 16-September 21, 1878).

⁵⁶SJ, X, No. 472 (March 29, 1879), 4.

⁵⁷SJ, XI, Nos. 524-549 (March 27-September 18, 1880); revived, XI, No. 567-XII, No. 589 (January 22-June 25, 1881).

gave "every particular" of academy life and regulations. Readers were informed at great length about the history of the naval academy, its tuition costs, rules, discipline, examinations, and courses.⁵⁸

Perhaps the most significant indication of the shift in audience appeal was the sudden change in title of the Beadle story paper. Throughout 1882 the Journal announced its usual policy of appealing to all classes of readers. Even as late as October 28 the Journal announced its prospectus for the next volume as the Journal. The change was a surprise to readers; the Journal of November 11, 1882, was to be the last. Thereafter, the paper would be called Beadle's Weekly. The announcement included a list of eighteen regular contributors to the Beadle paper, but not one woman author was named.

Even so, the effort to attract the feminine audience was not dropped entirely. The first number of Beadle's Weekly once again listed the regular contributors. But this time the ranks were much enlarged, and the names of twelve ladies joined those of thirty-one men. Never again, however, were women authors to be treated with such publicity in a Beadle and Adams weekly. The break between the old Journal and the new Beadle's Weekly was complete, or at least the publishers tried to make it appear so. Beadle's Weekly began its run with Volume I, Number 1, to all appearances a completely new paper. The editorial page, though still running the weekly

⁵⁸SJ, XI, Nos. 550-558 (September 25-November 20, 1880).

correspondence column, now consisted almost entirely of articles appealing to the male point of view. Between 1882 and 1884 the new feature series included sketches of "Plainsmen and Mountain Men," railroad stories supposedly told by engineers, brakemen, and station agents, and articles on mining and prospecting. The etiquette column, now written by Belle Bright (obviously a pseudonym), concerned only the manners of men.⁵⁹

The next phase of the Beadle and Adams story paper produced no great changes in audience appeal. On November 7, 1885, Beadle's Weekly announced that beginning with Volume IV there would be a change of title. The reason offered was that the old name had become "to a great degree, identified . . . with the Literature of Adventure." The result had been a narrowing of the scope of the paper. It was intended now "to widen and diversify" interest "to all classes," and to change the title so as to give notice to the public of the revitalization.⁶⁰

Indeed, the paper needed some new punch. Directories of the eighties gave Beadle's Weekly a poor circulation figure ranging from 10,000 to 20,000, very low for a paper that claimed to be the most popular story weekly printed. Changing the title to the Banner Weekly did little to improve the fortune of the Beadle and Adams paper. Circulation dwindled to even less than 10,000. Obviously money to buy new stories was short, for after 1886 reruns began to

⁵⁹The last Belle Bright column appeared in BeW, III, No. 131 (May 16, 1885).

⁶⁰BeW, III, No. 156 (November 7, 1885), 4.

appear in unprecedented numbers. Reruns and reprints had appeared before despite Beadle's persistent claims that tales which appeared in the story paper would not be reprinted in library form. This policy was ignored continually. But in the days of the Journal very few serials appeared a second time in the story paper itself. When a tale did reappear, it was an occasion for noting the popular demand that prompted the publishers to rerun the novel. The situation was quite different, however, in the days of the Banner Weekly. Reprintings from the Journal and Beadle's Weekly were not announced; in fact, such tales appeared with altered titles, the publishers probably hoping that old readers would not notice the reappearance of old serials. Between 1890 and 1897 the ninety-six serials written by the ten authors considered in this dissertation included thirty-four reruns of old material. A check of Johannsen's listings of titles in the "Dime Library" and "Half-Dime Library" shows that a similar situation existed in other departments of the firm's operations as well. Only fifty-eight of 258 numbers of the "Dime Library" published after January 1, 1895 were new. Only seventy-two of 258 numbers of the "Half-Dime Library" were not reprints.

The nineties were a period of slow demise for Beadle and Adams. When William Adams died in 1896, the Banner Weekly mourned for the "last of the founders of the publishing house of Beadle and Adams."⁶¹ The story paper, the "Dime Library," and the "Half-Dime Library" were the only publications left. Then on May 22, 1897, came the sudden

⁶¹BW, XV, No. 741 (January 23, 1897), 4.

announcement that the Banner Weekly was to be discontinued "at least temporarily." To the very last issue the Banner Weekly, quite understandably, carried its subscription rates on the masthead.⁶² But it was the end. The paper was never revived. And in February, 1898, the effects of the old house of Beadle and Adams passed to M. J. Ivers & Co.

Mary Noel laments Beadle and Adams' failure to win a wider circulation for its story paper.⁶³ Physically, its appearance was better than that of its competitors. Internally, one could find little to object to on moral grounds that he could not attribute to the better selling papers as well. From the very beginning Beadle and Adams claimed that

. . . we are in no sense sensational. This we abhor, if by it is meant what is atrocious, improbably, and false to nature. Our writers are no pen mountebanks, but earnest, talented, graceful narrators, whose productions are their best work.⁶⁴

Modern readers might well smile at Beadle's definition of "sensational." True, the story-paper engravings accompanying western tales, for example, specialized in gory detail. Indians slaughtered by a blood-spattered hero, a heroine wielding an axe at her red attackers: these are but samples of the standard illustrations. But Beadle and Adams did rule out, as did most of the more popular weeklies, all obvious impropriety in language, action, and situation. Early in its run, the Journal condemned what it

⁶²BW, XV, No. 758 (May 22, 1897), 4.

⁶³Noel, op. cit., p. 130.

⁶⁴SJ, III, No. 132 (September 21, 1872), 4.

called "impure literature": that which "makes heroes of burglars or describes pickpocketing."⁶⁵ This is indeed a limited criticism. But a later Journal article on "pernicious literature" condemned certain unnamed and very vaguely described boys' papers as "a blot on civilization." It is difficult, the article continued, to make such papers that glorify crime and lawlessness "more low, disgusting, and nefarious." Columns of such publications are filled with pictures, stories, and sketches "so gross that the only wonder is any boy but the most depraved can be persuaded to touch the offensive things."⁶⁶ On another occasion, the editor answered a correspondent who asked why "oaths or very rough language" did not appear in stories of real life. The Journal reply was that of any good story paper, and the statement could well apply generally to all story-paper material.

Many things "true to nature" are decidedly unpalatable and to be avoided--among which is indecent or blasphemous language or gross and licentious conduct. We want none of this in our matter.⁶⁷

Yet the same number of the Journal carried an advertisement for "Photo's [sic] of Actresses, Love Scenes, etc.," ten for twenty-five cents; "Views of pretty girls," three for twenty-five cents.⁶⁸

The moral fence that the Beadle papers and other weeklies attempted to straddle led to constant application of formularized solutions. Succeeding chapters of this study will attempt to

⁶⁵SJ, III, No. 132 (September 21, 1872), 4.

⁶⁶SJ, VIII, No. 416 (March 2, 1878), 4.

⁶⁷SJ, VII, No. 333 (July 29, 1876), 4.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 7.

elucidate the basic patterns of story-paper fiction as found in the Saturday Journal, Beadle's Weekly, and the Banner Weekly.

Chapters four, five, and six study the primary types of story-paper novel--domestic, western, and detective--in terms of the formulas they employ and in terms of the social and cultural implications of those formulas. But a brief look at the authors of story-paper novels is also appropriate here. Chapter three discusses certain prominent authors who wrote for story papers and especially those who wrote for Beadle and Adams.

CHAPTER THREE

WRITERS OF STORY-PAPER TALES;

OR, A BRIEF GLANCE AT THE

BEADLE HACKS

"Why is a popular contributor to the STAR JOURNAL much subjected to pain? Because isn't he always Aiken?

"Why may another be said to resemble a chanticleer? She is always a Crow-ell.

"What one may be said to avoid the omnibus expenses of his life, and why? He who can Wheel 'er.

"What author may unjustly be supposed to be a sleuth? Badger.

"What author should be a librarian? Reid.

"What man admonishes? Warne.

"What author may be said to ever be in a floury state? In-graham.

"What author may be esteemed by the ladies as a dear (deer)? Star-buck."

- "From a wide-awake correspondent," Saturday Journal, X, No. 473 (April 5, 1879), 4.

When Orville Victor listed "Instructions"¹ to authors of the Banner Weekly, he was merely codifying for the benefit of aspiring novices the rules which he had reiterated steadily since the first days of the Saturday Journal.² Prohibitions included "all things offensive to good taste in expression and incident . . . characters that carry an immoral taint . . . the repetition of an occurrence which, though true, is yet better untold," and anything that "cannot be read with satisfaction by every right-minded person--old and young alike." Requirements were "your best work . . . unquestioned originality . . . pronounced strength of plot and high dramatic interest of story . . . grace and precision of narrative, and correctness in composition." Writers were expected, furthermore, to be familiar with the characters they created, with the locales of their stories, and were on no account to attempt writing "in fields of which they have no intimate knowledge." Such requirements were part and parcel of story-paper policy, and by this codification the Banner Weekly was carrying on the policy announced in the first issue of the Journal: that the Beadle and Adams story paper would always be "healthy in tone," "thoroughly original," and "THOROUGHLY GOOD."³

¹BW, VI, No. 266 (December 17, 1887), 4; BW, VIII, No. 369 (December 7, 1889), 4.

²Typical is a series of three editorials, SJ, XI, Nos. 531-533 (May 15-29), 1880).

³SJ, I, No. 1 (March 19, 1870), 4.

Long before, the editorial page of the Journal had admonished readers aspiring to successful authorship that only an especially gifted writer could qualify for a career in journalism. He must above all be original, avoid the superficial by seeing "beneath the crust of outward forms," be adept enough to "read the human heart and . . . probe human feeling," and "see apposites and antithesis" [sic]. But in addition he must be exciting, yet tasteful; realistic, yet morally prudent; graceful, yet natural.⁴ Surely any respectable writing depends upon at least such basic requirements. Perhaps it is impossible to appreciate fully the problems of story-paper editors, but probably they were swamped with all sorts of unsolicited material from novice writers distinguishable only by the degree in which they lacked ability.

Inevitably, therefore, story papers tried to assure a steady stream of usable professional material by enlisting writers upon whom they could depend. Proven popular authors capable of writing sufficient quantities to fill a weekly's demands took up so many columns that the "one-shot" new writer had either to submit very promising material or hit the editor's desk when filler was required for the issue at hand.

The financially solid Ledger (1844-1903) was the first story paper to popularize the so-called exclusive contract. By 1857 Sylvanus Cobb and Emma D. E. N. Southworth, who respectively had been the top authors for the old Flag of Our Union and Saturday

⁴SJ, II, No. 90 (December 2, 1871), 4.

Evening Post, were under exclusive contract to the Ledger. Soon added to its staff were Harriet and Leon Lewis, Fanny Fern (Mrs. Sara Parton), and William H. Peck, whom Bonner won over from the exclusive employ of Saturday Night. The Weekly could claim the prolific Ned Buntline, John Hovey Robinson (another former mainstay of the Flag), Mrs. May Agnes Fleming, Mrs. Metta Victor (wife of the Beadle and Adams editor!), and Mrs. Mary J. Holmes. Saturday Night had the rights to work by Edward Ellis, Emerson Bennett, and Mrs. Fleming, before she moved over to the Weekly.

Entering the field as late as it did (1870), the Saturday Journal was forced to follow the pattern of exclusive contracts lest it suddenly find itself without contributors of established repute to supply fresh material. By the time the Journal was barely a year old it was proudly announcing on its editorial pages the names which would thenceforth grace only "the star of the weeklies."⁵ By 1880 the Journal could boast of Albert W. Aiken, Anthony P. Morris, Mrs. Mary Reed Crowell, Oll Coomes, Mayne Reid, Joseph Badger, Charles Morris, Prentiss Ingraham, Corinne Cushman (Mrs. Victor in disguise, possibly by agreement with the Weekly)--all of whom wrote exclusively for the Journal. But Mrs. Victor's being "exclusive" for two papers at once brings up a problem worth mentioning. For an author who appeared under his own name for one paper or magazine sometimes reserved the right to furnish

⁵Anthony P. Morris was its first "exclusive." SJ, II, No. 55 (April 1, 1871), 4.

pseudonymous stories for other publications. Such devices were sufficient to deceive readers and placate editors. When Corinne Cushman (Mrs. Victor) made her first appearance in the Journal, she was heralded as a new writer;⁶ but her first Beadle novel, Alice Wilde ("Dime Novel" No. 4, August 1, 1860), had appeared under her own name. More disturbing to readers and especially to editors was the appearance of an author's old work reprinted under his own name in a paper other than the one which held the so-called exclusive rights to his work.

Tenuous as an exclusive arrangement might appear, publishers had to be prepared to make all contracts financially attractive. The top price Bonner and the Ledger ever paid for a single work is, so far as I have been able to determine, the \$30,000 Henry Ward Beecher received for his novel Northwood.⁷ Sylvanus Cobb worked thirty years for the Ledger, turning out in that time, by his own count, 122 long stories, 862 short stories, and 2143 "Short Scraps."⁸ For this he received \$500 per long story and \$60 a week for the steady supply of short stories and scraps. Rapid calculation permits us to estimate Cobb's income from the Ledger at an average of around \$5000 yearly. Eliza Dupuy contracted for two novels yearly at \$1250 each. Mrs. Southworth and Harriet and Leon Lewis each

⁶SJ, VII, No. 329 (July 1, 1876), 4.

⁷Derby, Fifty Years among Authors, Books, and Publishers, p. 203.

⁸Entry in diary, March 6, 1886. Quoted by Stanwood Cobb, The Magnificent Partnership (New York, 1954), p. 34.

contracted for \$150 per weekly installment.⁹ It should be noted that Mrs. Southworth abided by her contract despite an offer from Saturday Night of \$10,000 for one long story.¹⁰ The extraordinarily popular Fanny Fern (Mrs. Sara Parton) was paid \$100 for her weekly column and \$400 for each of the ten installments of her only long story.¹¹ In 1868 Saturday Night was paying May Agnes Fleming \$1000 a story; but when she joined the Weekly in 1871 and received \$100 an installment, she was earning \$200 to \$600 more per story.¹² During the sixties, when the Weekly billed her as "Queen of the human heart," Mrs. Mary J. Holmes commanded a fee of \$4000 to \$6000 per story.¹³

In the light of such figures it is extraordinary that Beadle and Adams could afford to keep its exclusive staff intact. Mayne Reid was the company's highest paid writer; he received \$750 for The White Squaw ("Dime Novel" No. 155, July 24, 1868), and twenty years later that price was still the top.¹⁴ When Prentiss Ingraham told Gilbert Patten that his annual income was between \$15,000 and \$18,000, he was

⁹Noel, Villains Galore, pp. 87-88.

¹⁰Letter from Mrs. Southworth to Bonner, cited by Noel, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

¹¹Noel, op. cit., p. 64.

¹²Ibid., pp. 190-192.

¹³Derby, op. cit., p. 572. Reynolds, The Fiction Factory, p. 38, sets Mrs. Holmes' top price at \$5000.

¹⁴Gilbert Patten, "Dime-Novel Days," Saturday Evening Post, CCIII (February 28, 1931), 126.

undoubtedly figuring on the basis of the top rate and more than twenty long stories a year (a typical year's work for Ingraham in the eighties and nineties). Probably closer to the truth is another Ingraham statement in which he says his rates were \$150 for dime novels and \$75 for half-dime novels. How much better off then was Oll Coomes who received \$100 for Hawk-eye Harry and \$500 each for Happy Harry and The Boy Rifleman, all of which appeared first in the Journal and later in other Beadle libraries.¹⁵

It would be easy to assume that the Beadle writers were just not good enough for other papers. But to stop here is an oversimplification. For Beadle authors like Coomes, Badger, and Mrs. Victor fared better financially when they wrote for other papers. On the other hand, at least three Beadle steadies did all or almost all their writing only for Beadle and Adams. Mary Reed Crowell and Anthony Morris were both in their early twenties when they began writing exclusively for the Journal. Albert Aiken, descended from an acting family, gave up stage life to become one of the most faithful and prolific Beadle authors. Ingraham contributed briefly to the Family Story Paper and to Saturday Night, but most of the 600 novels he claimed in 1900¹⁶ were submitted to Beadle and Adams. Only after the firm's demise did he branch out to Golden Hours and others.

¹⁵From Coomes' memorandum book. Quoted in Johannsen, II, 65-66.

¹⁶Who's Who in America, 1901-1902.

Of course, Beadle and Adams could not consistently meet the prices of their competitors. Circulation figures (Appendix A, infra) show how far the Beadle weeklies lagged behind other story papers. On the one hand, Beadle and Adams had to keep up with their affluent rivals. Militating against the firm, on the other hand, was the general thrift policy that resulted in a wide discrepancy between rates paid by Beadle and Adams and those paid by other firms. Erastus Beadle once boasted that the \$250 his company paid was a good price.¹⁷ Facts and figures indicate that his boast was more than a little apart from the truth. Beadle and Adams was not an overly wealthy firm; Erastus Beadle's estate of \$72,000 was no match for George Munro's ten million.¹⁸ Nevertheless, aside from the fact that Beadle and Adams controlled a group of writers faithful enough to stick to the firm that developed their reputations, there often seemed insufficient cause for pinching pennies.

Much of the credit for keeping writers faithful to the Journal and its successors must go to Orville J. Victor, editor of the Beadle publications for thirty-six years (1861-1897). Surely William Adams did not in latter days of the company display a winning diplomacy by docking Gilbert Patten a dollar a day when the author asked to be paid ten days in advance of publication.

¹⁷Interview for the Boston Transcript. Cited by Noel, op. cit., p. 131.

¹⁸By citing court records Johanssen, I, 69, debunks the tale that Beadle's estate was worth three millions. Cf. Pearson, Dime Novels, p. 86, and Patten, op. cit., p. 129.

Patten describes Victor, however, as a writer's friend, who helped many aspirants become successful regular contributors. When necessary, Victor could be firm; and when a story was due he had no qualms about locking up his writer with only pen and paper until the material was delivered.¹⁹ But Victor was respected too for his editorial skill and for the scholarship he displayed even under the pressure of his editorial duties. Among his works are History, Civil, Political and Military of the Southern Rebellion (1868) and A History of American Conspiracies; a Record of Treason, Insurrection, Rebellion, etc. in the United States from 1760 to 1860 (1863).

I. Selecting Representative Authors for This Study

Johannsen's bibliography²⁰ indicates that some seventy-five authors supplied serials for the Beadle papers. The number can be only estimated, for Johannsen was unable to track down facts about several contributors. Identifications of the mystery names as pseudonyms or as real names would subtract from or add to the number of contributors. The seventy-five writers wrote for the Beadle story papers 607 individual serials, of which 580 were original in the weeklies and 545 appeared in other Beadle libraries before or after their runs in the weeklies.

¹⁹Patten, op. cit., p. 129.

²⁰Johannsen, II, 6-311.

For two reasons it has seemed unnecessary to survey every serial in the research for this study. First, this study aims to approach the Beadle story papers as a whole, attempting to generalize about the patterns of fiction published for the masses. When fiction is manufactured for a mass audience, moreover, the author's individuality takes a definite second place to the modes and molds into which he fits his work. Secondly, it has seemed desirable to choose a representative group of authors whose steady output of serials indicates that they were adept at supplying the particular demands of Beadle and Adams. For this study, therefore, I have chosen ten of the "seventy-five" contributors, and it is upon their work that I base the inductions I make in following chapters. Nor is the selection of ten non-representative; they are responsible for well over half the entire Beadle story paper crop of serials. Using Johanssen's list of serials, I have compiled the following table of the ten selected authors and the number of serials they represent. My count includes all reprintings of individual serials in the Beadle weeklies but not, of course, in other Beadle publications or libraries.

Prentiss Ingraham	- 102
Albert W. Aiken	- 86
Joseph E. Badger	- 43
Frederick Whittaker	- 40
Oll Coomes	- 37
Anthony P. Morris, Jr.	- 27
Charles Morris	- 21
Mary Reed Crowell	- 19
Metta V. Victor	- 18
William F. Cody	- <u>17</u>
	410

These ten authors are representative, furthermore, not only of each of the three weeklies individually, but also of the entire run of Beadle papers, as the following listings show.

Saturday Journal
(March 19, 1870 - November 11, 1882)

	All Authors:	Selected Authors:
Serials, including repetitions ²¹	305	188
Serials, excluding repetitions in weeklies	300	185
Serials original in <u>SJ</u>	284	177
Serials reprinted in other series	254	164

* * * * *

Beadle's Weekly
(November 18, 1882 - November 7, 1885)

	All Authors:	Selected Authors:
Serials, including repetitions	79	58
Serials, excluding repetitions in weeklies	76	58
Serials original in <u>BeW</u>	76	58
Serials reprinted in other series	68	54

²¹ This table excludes Mary Reed Crowell's Under the Upas, incomplete with the last number of SJ and begun anew in BeW as The Counterfeit Son.

Banner Weekly
(November 14, 1885 - May 22, 1897)

	All Authors:	Selected Authors:
Serials, including repetitions	297	164
Serials, excluding repetitions in weekly	231	132
Serials original in <u>BW</u>	220	129
Serials reprinted in other series	223	130

* * * * *

Combined figures for all
Beadle Story Papers
(March 19, 1870 - May 22, 1897)

	All Authors:	Selected Authors:
Total number of serials, including all repetitions	681	410
Total number of serials, excluding repetitions in the weeklies	607	375
Number of serials original in the weeklies	580	364
Serials reprinted in other Beadle series	545	348

II. Notes on Selected Authors

Metta V. Victor and Mary Reed Crowell were most in demand, during the run of the Saturday Journal, because stories of love and marriage, villainous seducers, and other domestic troubles were

still popular in those days before Beadle's and others turned their sights upon the teen-aged, male reading public. Of the ten selected authors, Mrs. Victor is the only one belonging to the pre-Civil War generation of story writers. By the time she married Orville Victor in 1856, Metta Fuller had published several volumes including a novel The Senator's Son, which it is claimed went through ten editions in the United States and sold 80,000 copies in England.²² She was also a contributor to the Saturday Evening Post, and to the Illuminated Western World which her husband edited. The husband-wife team joined Beadle's at about the same time. Victor's The Life of Joseph Garibaldi (December 20, 1860) was the first volume of Beadle's "Dime Biographical Library," while Mrs. Victor edited the last three semi-annual issues of The Home (1859-1860) and contributed the Dime Recipe Book and the Dime Cookbook (1860) to the "Family Handbook Series." During the seventies Mrs. Victor was under exclusive contract to furnish stories for the Weekly, but she found time to supply her husband with eleven love stories for the Journal.

Mary Reed Crowell was no serious rival to Mary Jane Holmes, but she was the Journal's foremost contributor of love stories. Mrs. Crowell was only twenty-three when her first work appeared in the Journal, but having married at seventeen she was already a matron. Her imagination was so vivid, moreover, that on one occasion, "while delineating a rather horrendous scene," she so frightened herself that she called her husband to escort her through the dark halls to

²²Johannsen, II, 278-279. Also National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, IV, 522-523.

another lighted room.²³ Small wonder perhaps that most of her serials concern young girls between sixteen and eighteen confronting harrowing situations growing out of courtship and marriage. She hardly had time to write for another paper, for her output of nineteen serials was not her only contribution to the Journal. After her initial appearance, there was seldom an issue without either a short story by Mrs. Crowell or an installment of her latest serial. The short stories appeared almost weekly during the run of the Journal, all less complicated, of course, than her novels, all turning upon some phase of the course of true love.

Both Metta Victor and Mary Reed Crowell passed from the weekly pages in 1881 when Beadle's Weekly slanted its content to appeal to boy readers. Mrs. Crowell's name remained only to the completion of a serial begun in the Journal and a few subsequent sketches. The one Metta Victor serial reprinted in the Banner Weekly appeared under the by-line "C. Cushman,"²⁴ the editors surely hoping no one would notice or remember that it came from a woman's hand.

Anthony and Charles Morris were not related either by blood or by theme. By the time he was twenty Anthony Morris had written sketches and stories for two Washington papers, the Sunday World and the Saturday Evening Visitor. The first Journal exclusive, he supplied Beadle's with seventeen serials for the Journal and Beadle's

²³Johannsen, II, 73.

²⁴The Opera Singer's Shadower; or, The Guardian's Plot for Millions, BW, XIII, Nos. 648-660 (April 13-July 6, 1895).

Weekly, his final novel appearing in the early days of the latter.²⁵

His specialty was the city with Gothic and grotesque settings and characters. His was a world of hunchbacks, dwarfs, ghosts, curses, and enchanted talismans. Charles Morris, on the other hand, was a one-time school teacher²⁶ who took for his main theme the rise of young boys from the streets to positions of wealth and importance. With Charles Morris, whose first Beadle tale appeared in 1876, the firm carried on the Alger tradition.

Coomes, Badger, and Whittaker were suppliers of western stories. Coomes was born in Iowa, Badger in Illinois. Both spent some of their youth roaming the plains, so they knew at least many locales whereof they wrote.²⁷ London born, Whittaker moved to the United States with his parents while he was still a child. Having enlisted in the Union army, he rose from the ranks and was discharged a lieutenant. Though there is some doubt, records seem to indicate that Whittaker was entitled to the "Captain" which so often appeared in his by-lines.²⁸ These three writers were especially concerned with the West between 1840 and 1860. Their main characters are trappers, hunters, and daring explorers. Whittaker supplied, in addition, several Alger-type rise-to-fortune serials for Beadle's Weekly.

²⁵SJ, IV, No. 163 (April 26, 1873), 4. Also Johannsen, II, 205-207.

²⁶Johannsen, II, 209.

²⁷Ibid., II, 24-26; 65-66. Also BW, V, No. 235 (May 14, 1887), 4.

²⁸Johannsen, II, 301, gives the facts of the problem.

The most prolific pair that Beadle and Adams could boast were Aiken and Ingraham. Legend would make much of their abilities to produce quantities of fiction. Aiken, who gave up acting for writing, is said to have spent his time churning out his novels in a crowded upper storeroom in the Beadle building. Ingraham supposedly whipped up a 33,000-word story--written in longhand--in twenty-four hours.²⁹ They were speedy, but they were of additional value to the company because they were versatile enough to write several different types of novels.

Aiken wrote with equal fluency about both the East and the West, often combining the locales in a single story. His early Beadle stories concerned city life, lost fortunes, lost heirs, villainous guardians and relatives, and beautiful heiresses in distress. But when Aiken created a hero who could appear over and over again, he went west for his locale. Dick Talbot became the hero of sixteen Aiken novels. The author, however, never neglected the eastern scene; and when he created the amazing detective Joe Phenix, Aiken had found a character who could reappear in a series of his own with the big city his locale.³⁰

Ingraham is at once the easiest and the most difficult author of the ten to deal with. He is the easiest because of his versatility.

²⁹George C. Jenks, "Dime Novel Makers," The Bookman (New York), XX (October 1904), 108; Gilbert Patten, "Dime-Novel Days," Saturday Evening Post, CCIII (March 7, 1931), 52.

³⁰Aiken even cast Talbot and Phenix in a single story: Dick Talbot in New York; or, Tracked from the Mountains to the Metropolis, BeW, II, Nos. 92-103 (August 16-November 1, 1884).

Equally at home in the East, in the West, or on the sea, he turned out novel after novel with great variety of settings. In addition, his own colorful career as a soldier provided him with many usable incidents. Between 1860 and 1875 Ingraham was a lieutenant in the Confederate army, fought in Mexico with Juarez against the French, served on General Hoffmann's staff at the Battle of Sandowa, Austria, fought against the Turks in Crete, and joined the Cuban rebels against Spain. In Cuba he held simultaneously the ranks of army colonel and navy captain. During the seventies and eighties he also spent some time in the West, often with Buffalo Bill Cody. During the nineties he became advance agent for Cody's Wild West Show.³¹ Ingraham's stories reflect his diverse experiences, but they fall into two general divisions. His sea stories belong to the Journal run. During the later days of the Journal Ingraham began writing his western stories, and his output from then on consisted almost entirely of westerns. The city story, which he continued to write throughout his career, was always only a side line.

Difficulties present themselves when a student confronts Ingraham's supply of pen names. In the Beadle story papers alone he was Major Dangerfield Burr, Dr. Noel Dunbar, Midshipman T. W. King, J. B. Omohundro, Lieutenant Harry Dennies Perry, Dr. Frank Powell-- and Colonel Prentiss Ingraham.

³¹Johannsen, II, 155-158.

Ingraham probably is responsible also for many novels which appear under Buffalo Bill Cody's name. A close disciple of Ned Buntline, Ingraham took over the glorification of Buffalo Bill where Buntline left off. Certainly there is no question that Ingraham wrote hundreds of tales about Cody; the unanswerable question concerns the number of tales supposed to have been written by Cody. Cody's name first appeared on a by-line over a short story, "The Haunted Valley," printed in Vickery's Fireside Visitor for April 1875. His first long tale was The Pearl of the Prairies for the Weekly the following August.³² He first appeared in a Beadle publication in September.³³ These dates coincide with Helen Cody Wetmore's comments in her biography of Buffalo Bill. She says that in 1875, though he had but little education, Cody began to submit stories to publishers. She aided him in those days by polishing work "destitute of punctuation and short of capitals in many places."³⁴ It is highly unlikely, however, that Cody wrote all or even most of the tales ascribed to him, if for no other reason than his time-consuming career as a showman. Ingraham is the surest candidate for Cody's ghost, at least for tales with Cody's by-line appearing

³²XXX (August 9, 1875).

³³Deadly-Eye, the Unknown Scout, SJ, VI, Nos. 287-293 (September 11-October 23, 1875).

³⁴Helen Cody Wetmore and Zane Grey, Last of the Great Scouts (New York, 1918), pp. 239-240.

in the Beadle story papers.³⁵ Nevertheless, the problem remains perplexing. I have included in this study as Cody's, therefore, all serials with Cody's by-line without attempting to determine how many should be credited to Ingraham.

³⁵Jenks, op. cit., p. 112. Johannsen, II, 59-61, sums up the case for Buffalo Bill as author.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BEADLE DOMESTIC TALE; OR,

WHO ARE MY PARENTS?

Of course all this was followed by a wedding. It would not be in the nature of things otherwise. And this story would scarcely have been commenced unless the writer could have been able to chronicle a happy ending. For it is never desirable nor benevolent to make two excellent classes of people unhappy. Viz.: the readers of a story, and the characters; the one having the right of a pleasant termination of their task, and the other of a happy ending from their troubles.

- Charles Morris, Billy Baggage,
the Railroad Boy, Saturday
Journal, XI, Nos. 521-531
(March 6-May 15, 1880).

Beautiful but unhappy Florence Arbuthnot, in love with Archibald Chesson, is kept prisoner in her room by her mother because she refuses to marry the hateful Ellis Dorrance. Archibald's family also disapproves of his love for Florence because she is a "nobody"; instead the Chessons hope to maneuver a marriage between their son and the not so beautiful heiress, Gussie Palliser. For her own part, Gussie, secretly betrothed to Ellis, accepts the Chessons' invitation to be a houseguest simply so she can be near the man she really loves.

Florence and Archibald, though separated by their parents' disapproval, correspond secretly by carrier pigeon. Alas, Ellis one day intercepts the pigeon and substitutes a message he himself wrote. Because of his deception Florence believes she is to elope with her beloved Archibald. On the appointed night, however, Ellis climbs the ladder to her room, chloroforms her, leaves behind a note informing the family of an elopement with Archibald, and abducts the beautiful, desirable, but not willing heroine.

Ellis whisks Florence to Haunted House--a mysterious mansion located nearby--where he puts her under the care of Isabel Lefevre, apparently his paramour. Believing that Florence means nothing to him and that this is just another ransom scheme, Isabel willingly helps her lover. But Gussie has followed him, and finding Isabel alone Gussie reveals to her Ellis Dorrance's "treble-dyed blackness of heart"; namely, that while he lives with Isabel and is secretly

betrothed to Gussie, he intends to marry Florence. The two women decide to work together to punish their false lover.

Following Ellis's directions, Isabel disguises Florence as a Negress by curling her hair and dyeing her skin. But after the transformation is complete and the still drugged Florence is locked up and alone, she is once again abducted--this time by Jim Palmer, Ellis's collaborator, also in love with Florence. When Ellis returns to find his prize missing, he concludes that Archibald is responsible. Meanwhile the Arbuthnots have threatened Archibald with arrest if he does not reveal Florence's whereabouts. The innocent lover, therefore, begins to search the countryside for the missing girl.

Palmer, having brought Florence to a cabin in the woods, confesses his love for her. When she tells him to leave, he agrees to do so in return for a kiss. Florence gives him a peck on the cheek, and the honorable kidnaper leaves. Florence, again left alone, screams when she hears someone approach. It is Archibald. But when he breaks into the cabin to make his rescue, he finds only a Negress in a deep faint. He fails to recognize his beloved Florence. Because Haunted House is nearby and because, moreover, Archibald is unaware of its occupants' identity, he takes the "Negress" there for protection, thus unwittingly returning her to her imprisonment.

By this time Isabel has left Haunted House for New York. For Florence's re-abduction leads Isabel to believe that Ellis has deceived her once again, has stolen Florence away himself, and plans to take her to England. Actually the wicked Palmer plans that very thing. Isabel, however, sees Palmer's name on a sailing list,

believes that Ellis is traveling incognito, and books passage for herself. But Palmer does not go through with his scheme; and when the ship sinks, Isabel, alone of all the characters in the story, is among the lost.

Palmer, returning to the cabin to take Florence to England and finding her gone, concludes that Ellis and Isabel are responsible. When he goes to Haunted House and reveals to Ellis his part in the second abduction, Ellis drives him off with a pistol. Ellis has, furthermore, brought home to Haunted House the carrier pigeon that Florence and Archibald had used to deliver their love letters. Florence, now quite recovered from the effects of the drugs and once again able to use her wits, steals the pigeon and dispatches it to Archibald with a note. Just as a very drunk Ellis Dorrance attempts to force a kiss upon Florence, Archibald, Gussie, Mr. and Mrs. Arbuthnot, and Palmer break into Haunted House to rescue the suffering heroine.

A story is never complete, however, without some explanation of motives. Involved here are attainment of wealth by marriage and a mother's desire to provide the best for her child. Mrs. Arbuthnot was Mrs. Palliser's nurse when Gussie, the heiress, was born. Plotting to better the lot of her own child, Mrs. Arbuthnot substituted her own newly born daughter for the infant heiress. Florence, therefore, is the real Palliser heiress, and Gussie is really an Arbuthnot. Now, years later, Mrs. Arbuthnot plots to better the lot of another child, her son, none other than Ellis Dorrance. Complicating the affair is the fact that Ellis is already married to

Isabel. Hence the need for secrecy. At the end of the tale, Florence, no longer a "nobody," forgives all except Ellis, whose brutish, forced attentions upon her she cannot countenance. Rather than submit to legal punishment, Ellis commits suicide. Now that Florence is a wealthy heiress, the Chessons withdraw all objections to her suitability as a wife for Archibald.

The story closes with the ironic authorial comment, "Such is the way of the world!"

This is an elaborate summary of Mary Reed Crowell's The Winged Messenger,¹ typical of the domestic novels that appeared in Beadle's papers. Further, The Winged Messenger contains most of the plot formulas and devices found at work in any Beadle tale, whether domestic, western, or detective. The following list of motifs of The Winged Messenger can, perhaps, constitute a guide to subsequent discussions of Beadle serials.

- 1) A Romantic Triangle. A triangle is formed when Florence loves the disapproved Archibald and is loved in turn by the repugnant Ellis.
- 2) Family Disapproval. The Chessons disapprove of Florence because she is a "nobody" and would not make a good match socially or financially for their son.
- 3) Abduction. The heroine is abducted both by a rejected suitor, Ellis, and by a secret lover, Palmer.

¹The Winged Messenger; or, Risking All for a Heart, SJ, III, Nos. 128-132 (August 24-September 21, 1872).

4) Concealed Identity. Several characters are quite unaware of their true parentage and social status or of their blood relationship to at least one other character.

5) Identification. The heroine is at the end identified as an heiress.

Mary Noel has aptly termed the formula "the Grand Reunion theme."² This is as good a label as any, though we might also suggest that it be called the It's-a-Small-World theme, the Who-Are-my-Parents theme, or in Aristotle's term, the Recognition theme.

In addition to embodying the reunion motifs, The Winged Messenger typifies the story-paper novel in its several ethical assumptions. There are overt suggestions that money is the root of villainy, though, on the other hand, at the end of the story the hero and heroine face a wealthy future. Second, it is suggested that several successive marriages by a man or a woman lead only to difficulty, especially for the children of the marriages. Third, women in general, but especially beautiful and/or wealthy women, are naturally preyed upon by unscrupulous fortune hunters. The rest of this chapter proposes to discuss the recurrence of such motifs and ethical assumptions about domestic life in the Beadle story paper serials.

I. Beautiful Heroines and Triangles

Most necessary to the formation of a story triangle is a beautiful girl. Albert Aiken provides a brief archetypal description in

²Noel, Villains Galore, pp. 144-156.

Chin Chin, the Chinese Detective wherein a missing society belle is described on a reward poster. She is eighteen years old, five feet five inches tall, and weighs but one hundred pounds. She is a brunette with black eyes and hair, a "very clear complexion . . . regular features and perfect teeth."³ Aiken failed to indulge himself, but other authors allowed readers to visualize their lovable heroines much more clearly. Mrs. Crowell, for example, describes Undine del Rose in terms of portraiture.

. . . her scarlet-stained cheeks, and jetty hair, streaming over neck and rounded bosom; her glowing, sparkling eyes, made a rare, Orientally warm, picture.⁴

The "Orientally warm" picture fills out Aiken's reward poster description, to be sure, but Mrs. Crowell's attempt is still comparatively skimpy. By contrast, Anthony Morris was capable of approximating exotic sensuousness in describing a mysterious black-haired beauty.

Her complexion was faint olive, tinged with a delicate blush; the face chiseled in purest beauty. Full red lips parted over teeth to shame the whitest ivory; eyes of jet and brilliant as the luster of a diamond. Her hair reached below the waist--black, silken, and falling in a mossy cloud; and on her forehead, held by a band of gold, was a jeweled star, that flashed and glittered in the bright light of the chandelier.

Her habit was of black, spangled with silver--its low cut exposing a neck, throat, and bust to tempt the passion of a god; and the dress being

³Chin Chin, the Chinese Detective; or, The Dark Work of the Black Hand, BeW, III, Nos. 130-142 (May 9-August 1, 1885).

⁴Oath-Bound; or, The Masked Bride, SJ, II, Nos. 53-60 (March 18-May 6, 1871).

looped gradually away from the right knee, a chaste display of exquisite symmetry told of a form that equalled the face in its enrapturing loveliness.⁵

An atypical description? Perhaps Morris does exercise more license than the average writer of story-paper novels, but it should be noted that he does not exceed the bounds; there is no mention, for example, of "legs" or "body." Indeed, a Beadle writer would hardly be that daring. And Morris knew well how to temper sensuous terms like "low cut," "exposing," and "passion" with words not erotically charged, like "delicate," "chaste," "exquisite," and "symmetry."

For a picture of the complete woman, however, we must look again to Mrs. Crowell. The heroine of The Ebon Mask, "the beauteous Helene Valencie," is a girl with more than physical beauty.

It was not in beauty of feature that Helene Valencie excelled all others; it was not that her eyes were brighter, deeper, clearer, than any of the other village beauties, or that her lovely jetty hair fell rippling over a fairer neck than theirs; it was not all this that impressed the observer with an indelible picture of her superior beauty; it was the pure soul, the gentle disposition, marked in every character of her face, in every lineament of her features.

Pure, gentle and loving, Helene Valencie was an object to love and be loved.

And she did love, and was loved.⁶

Such amplifications of Aiken's reward poster description of a black-haired beauty should not lead to the conclusion that all

⁵The Flaming Talisman; or, The Unfilled Vow, SJ, II, Nos. 90-100 (December 2, 1871-February 10, 1872). Repeated in BW, XII, Nos. 597-607 (April 21-June 30, 1894).

⁶The Ebon Mask; or, The Mysterious Guardian, SJ, I, Nos. 5-11 (April 16-May 28, 1870).

Beadle heroines were brunettes. Many blondes are just as glowingly described. But the blonde-brunette dichotomy which found its best known expression in Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and in each of the Leatherstocking tales seems to have been out of fashion by the time the Beadle writers began coloring their heroines' hair. The important feature is that the heroine, blonde or brunette, is usually in her late teens, extraordinarily beautiful, tall and slim--almost skinny by modern standards--and absolutely virtuous.

Given the beautiful maiden, it is almost certain that at least two men will love her. Usually the plot is in motion as soon as two suitors are introduced to the story. Usually, also, a reader could expect the formularized abductions, escapes, and reunions to succeed each other, until after some two or three months of weekly installments the hero and heroine are happily married. Not often were triangles resolved without the expected struggles between the noble and the villainous. But woven into the plot structure of Joseph Badger's Equality Eph, the Outlaw of Chaparral,⁷ partly a detective story and partly a western adventure story, are a number of triangles all formed by noble characters. This is the list of lovers and beloveds:

Kirke Howard	loves Missouri Belle
Missouri Belle	loves Mark Bird
Mark Bird	loves Minnie Lamb
Minnie Lamb	loves Dashing Ned
Dashing Ned	loves Missouri Belle

The sure sign of trouble is that there are five lovers for only

⁷Equality Eph, the Outlaw of Chaparral; or, Sport and Peril in Texas, SJ, IX, Nos. 448-459 (October 12-December 28, 1878).

four beloveds. In this story, it seems, time works wonders. The last chapter tells of the amicable arrangements that dissolve the triangles. Dashing Ned marries Missouri Belle; Mark Bird marries Minnie Lamb; and Kirke Howard, resigning himself to bachelorhood, makes his home with his friends, Mark and Minnie (not, of course, with Belle, the original object of his affection).

More often, however, one man in the triangle is a villain who stops at nothing to win the heroine. Hallison Blair, the villain of Anthony Morris's Hoodwinked,⁸ wins the hand of Pauline Herndon by poisoning her father and forging a new will which makes Pauline an heiress only on the condition that she marry Blair. When Victor Hasson, Pauline's true lover, begins to look into the circumstances of the father's death, Blair clubs him and entombs him alive. Fortunately, a faithful servant hears Victor's shouts from the vault and rescues him. Further investigation leads to the revival of Mr. Herndon who was also buried alive. Together the two men, father and suitor, hunt the villain who has by now taken his bride to London. To escape punishment Blair commits suicide, conveniently making the victimized Pauline an eligible widow.

But Hoodwinked has a straightforward plot. Story line can become quite complex when a frustrated suitor gains revenge by harming the children of the successful suitor and his bride. Again we can

⁸Hoodwinked; or, Dead and Alive, A Tale of Man's Perfidy and Woman's Faith, SJ, II, Nos. 59-68 (April 29-July 1, 1871). Repeated in BW, XII, Nos. 575-586 (November 18, 1893-February 3, 1894).

turn to an Anthony Morris novel, Iron and Gold.⁹ The wicked Dr. Onnorann murders Calvin Mandor so that in time he can marry the widow. But widow Mandor, continually spurning the doctor, marries Wilbur Kearn instead. When Mrs. Kearn dies during the birth of a daughter, Olse, the doctor hires a Negress to steal the infant, and then attempts to blackmail the doubly bereft Kearn. The terms: information about the infant in return for the hand of Zella, daughter of Mrs. Kearn's first marriage. Onnorann's attempt at blackmail is frustrated, however, when Kearn drops dead of a heart attack.

Zella has lost the only father she ever knew; for from early childhood she bore her stepfather's name. Opportunely Calvin Mandor, having somehow escaped death, reappears only to be "murdered" a second time by the relentless Onnorann. This time the doctor drops Mandor through a trap door into a raging sewer, but Mandor again escapes and renews the search for his daughter. After a long and apparently fruitless search Mandor learns the truth from the hired Negress kidnaper.

Apparently to a Beadle author no extremes of revenge were beyond a spurned lover's ken. In Prentiss Ingraham's The Half-Brother's Sin¹⁰ the rival suitors are brothers alike enough to be twins. Vance, the rejected suitor, hires an assassin to kill Peter,

⁹Iron and Gold; or, The Night-Hawks of St. Louis, SJ, III, Nos. 143-153 (December 7, 1872-February 15, 1873). Repeated in BW, XI, Nos. 559-569 (July 29-October 7, 1893).

¹⁰The Half-Brother's Sin; or, The Inheritance Accursed. A Romance of Real Life with the Mask Torn Off, SJ, XIII, Nos. 656-661 (October 7-November 11, 1882). Repeated in BW, IX, Nos. 422-433 (December 13, 1890-March 14, 1891).

and then steals the intended bride who quite naturally makes a mistake in identity. Peter, having recovered from the supposedly fatal wound, works undercover to ruin Vance and then kills him in a duel. The innocent suitor has now become avenger.

But his revenge has just begun. For years he works to find means to ruin Vance's son Frank. On his deathbed Peter learns that Frank has just married for money a woman who is actually penniless. Just before his death Peter alters his will to divide his money between Frank and his own ward, Hortense Howland, provided the two marry within a year. His attempted revenge is two-fold; for he not only believes that either Frank or Hortense is rapacious enough to murder the cumbersome wife, but also engineers a marriage between first cousins, Hortense being Peter's daughter by a secret marriage.

Frank's wife is indeed poisoned, but not by Frank and Hortense. The deed is accomplished by the two mothers who have in disguise collaborated to foil Peter's revenge. Frank and Hortense marry, of course, and divide the fortune. But the well-meaning mothers do not escape a punishment of sorts. They are shot in an attempt to steal Peter's will and other papers from his lawyer's office.

Family disasters also arise from mistaken triangles. Badger's A Drama of Mississippi Life. In Three Scenes¹¹ details the story of Thomas Remeyer, who believing his wife has eloped with another man, deserts her without seeking proof of her infidelity. After his

¹¹SJ, XI, Nos. 539-541 (July 10-24, 1880).

desertion he devotes himself to tracking down his wife's seducer. When the two men finally confront each other aboard a river boat, Remeyer mortally wounds his supposed rival in a duel. A young and handsome doctor attends the dying man and makes him corroborate the truth: that the villain convinced the faithful wife that Remeyer had deserted her for another wife and that in grief she ran away-- but alone, not with the suitor. Since then, disguised as a man because of the prejudice against women doctors, she has practiced medicine to support herself. Yes, the young doctor is the wronged wife; and faithful husband and faithful wife, victims of a covetous would-be seducer, are happily reunited.

The wronged wife is also the subject of the even more outlandish The Lady of the Lone Isle by Mrs. Metta Victor.¹² Archibald Ellery, believing his wife has "wronged him," nevertheless does not want to kill her. Instead he abandons her on a well-stocked, deserted island and arranges for a ship to supply her needs annually. After several years the wife is rescued and returns to the United States, but she does not reveal herself to her husband. The husband, thinking his wife is dead, remarries. When, fifteen years after the original exile, Ellery discovers his wife's innocence, he exiles himself to the same island. After his second wife dies, the wronged first wife takes a missionary with her to the island and remarries her husband.

It should be noticeable by now that the women involved in the triangles suffer more than the men, that the women, victimized and

¹²The Lady of the Lone Isle; or, More Sinned against than Sinning, SJ, XIII, Nos. 625-642 (March 4-July 1, 1882).

rashly judged, are the sympathetic characters, and that triangle stories do not have happy endings unless the woman is vindicated and happy. But women are the sympathetic characters even when they form two angles of the triangle. Mrs. Crowell was adept at creating such situations in her brief sketches. In "Did She Do Right?"¹³ Vira D'Alembert loves Ernest Monteith, who in turn silently loves Irma, Vira's cousin and ward. When Ernest asks Vira for Irma's hand, Vira confesses her love for him but lets him go. Irma, however, refuses him, telling him she does not love him "as a woman ought to love the man she will marry," and begging him to love Vira. Ten years later, after Irma has married happily and become a mother, Ernest comes back to Vira. True love, sacrifice, and abnegation figure also in "Marion's Sacrifice."¹⁴ Ida Rossitur, too proud and coquettish to admit she loves Winfield Grey, refuses his proposal. When he returns two years later, Ida admits her love for him; but it is too late, for Winfield is betrothed to Marion Thorne. On their wedding day Grey dies. Seven weeks later both women meet at the dead man's grave. Both have had to sacrifice because of love: Ida her pride in order to admit her love for Grey; Marion--making by far the greater sacrifice--her husband and happiness.

But perhaps the most significant note in these triangle stories is that woman's love is true, persevering, sacrificing, and forgiving.

¹³SJ, I, No. 30 (October 8, 1870), 3.

¹⁴SJ, I, No. 16 (July 2, 1870), 5.

What more typical a statement of true love could one hope to find than that of the heroine in Mrs. Victor's A Gay Deceiver. The flirtatious heroine, having barely escaped the deceptions of a villainous seducer, swallows her pride to accept her faithful lover's proposal. At the end of the novel she is only eighteen, but her harrowing experiences have made her wise in the ways of love.

"That was a child's fancy, Walter. What did I know in those days, of men or life, or my own dreaming heart? If I had loved him with a woman's love--as I do you--do you think I could have lived after what happened? No, thank God, my pride was wounded, my fairy dreams scattered like rainbow bubbles which burst in air; but my trouble was a child's trouble. I am a woman now, Walter, and I give you a woman's love. I tell you this so that you may never be jealous of that dead dream of an imaginative child. I want you to feel, dear, that you are my first love as well as my last."¹⁵

II. Heirs and Heiresses

Often the villain of a Beadle domestic novel plots to gain control of a wealthy woman's fortune either by marriage or by some deception. Ingraham's The Gambler-Guardian's Desperate Play¹⁶

¹⁵A Gay Deceiver; or, The Bitterest Blow of All, SJ, XII, Nos. 608-624 (November 5, 1881-February 25, 1882).

¹⁶The Gambler-Guardian's Desperate Play; or, The Shadow-Scorcher's Compact. A Thrilling Story of the Avenging Californian, BW, XV, Nos. 730-743 (November 7, 1896-February 6, 1897).

revolves around a scheme to gain possession of a lucrative guardianship. A father too ill to care for his daughter makes his dear friend her guardian. But to usurp control of the unsuspecting maiden's fortune the guardian's evil twin brother deceives the girl by impersonation, takes her West, and attempts to cover his tracks.

Earlier in his career Ingraham had written Florette, Child of the Streets¹⁷ around the same complication. In Florette, however, villainous Burton Prince intercepts a letter informing Carl Brandt that he and his sister have inherited several millions from an English uncle. Prince then frames Brandt for a bank robbery, so that as a felon Brandt would be prohibited from being his own sister's guardian. The villain plots to gain control of the fortune first by being appointed Florette's guardian and later by marrying her to insure that the fortune will remain under his control even after the girl comes of age. Prince is foiled only because he had promised marriage to another girl. In order to remove the annoying fiancée, he plans to go through a mock ceremony and then desert his supposed wife. The supposedly fake minister, however, is quite legitimate, and he performs a legal ceremony. Not only is the victimized Florette saved from Prince's connivance, but, her virtue having been protected, she can marry the man she really loves.

¹⁷ Florette, Child of the Streets; or, A Pearl beyond Price, A Metropolitan Romance of More Truth than Fiction, SJ, XI, Nos. 555-566 (October 30, 1880-January 15, 1881). Repeated in BW, IX, Nos. 452-463 (July 11-September 26, 1891).

When money leads to marriage itself, the unwilling bride is often forced or tricked into consent. Perhaps the bride is part of the price a blackmailed father pays the villain to keep his past dark.¹⁸ Or, as more often happens, the woman's beauty and wealth, combined with her unwillingness to marry, lead to her being coerced. This brings us back once again to The Winged Messenger, for Mrs. Crowell's novel was an early contribution to a long succession of "inheritance" novels.

Not always does the inheritance theme involve a villain's suit for marriage. But all are concerned with the identification of the heir. Problems of identification become more complex as the number of possible claimants to a fortune is increased. In Anthony Morris's Stealing a Heart,¹⁹ for example, the fundamental inheritance problem arises because Edgar St. Sylvin marries twice. But the situation is made more complicated when Edgar deserts his first wife and their daughter, and unknown to him the wife subsequently bears his son. Edgar's second wife is a lowly seamstress, disliked by Edgar's wealthy mother. Madame St. Sylvin manages to separate Edgar from wife and daughter, but after this separation, also, the wife bears his son. Edgar has, therefore, a son and daughter by each wife, but though he knows of the second son, he is

¹⁸ Ingraham, Duke Despard, the Gambler Duelist; or, The Lady of Luck, BW, V, Nos. 217-230 (January 8-April 9, 1887).

¹⁹ Stealing a Heart; or, The Rival Half Sisters, A Tale of the Tides of Love, SJ, IV, Nos. 170-180 (June 14-August 23, 1873). Repeated in BW, XIV, Nos. 700-711 (April 11-June 27, 1896).

entirely unaware of the existence of the first. Both sons, furthermore, are named Mark. After Edgar's death, Madame St. Sylvin, well aware of the older son's existence, bribes an attorney to dispose of a will favoring the younger Mark, the son of the seamstress. Only after Madame St. Sylvin's death does the truth become known.

Over and over the identification pattern is repeated and embroidered. And usually a beautiful girl is found to be an heiress. Even when the death of a supposed father leads to a heroine's discovery that she is really an adopted child who is going to be evicted penniless by her foster brother, she is eventually identified as the niece of a wealthy banker with an inheritance of her own after all.²⁰ Heirs and heiresses as they appear in the Beadle novels come from anywhere and everywhere. Perhaps they are truly orphans; and perhaps the wills leading to their wealth have never been discovered. Perhaps they are the issue of a love match, a secret marriage broken up when the wealthy husband is forced to desert his wife and contract a marriage socially more acceptable to his family. Perhaps, also, the wealthy deserting husband is not even aware that his lowly wife has borne a child. Another possibility, illustrated in The Winged Messenger, is the "substitution of a commoner" scheme. In this formula heirs and heiresses are lost because a family nurse exchanges infants to assure the happy future of her own child. The heiress in this situation grows up a

²⁰Crowell, Did She Sin? or, A Man's Desperate Game, A Romance of a Young Wife's Fight with Fate, SJ, X, Nos. 492-506 (August 16-November 22, 1879).

beautiful, well-mannered maiden, loved truly by a wealthy suitor and falsely by a villain who is somehow aware of her parentage and wants to gain control of the fortune before the girl herself discovers the truth.

Variations of the exchange formula result ultimately in the same ending. The nurse might substitute her living child for a dead infant heir. Or an exchange of infants might well be made in revenge by a rejected suitor or a scorned woman. But all such variations concern heirs who having been adopted, exchanged, or lost as babes are unaware of their identity. The formula works as well when the principals are fully aware of their antecedents; for kin often fight kin when a fortune is at stake. In another Ingraham story²¹ a cousin is made executor of an estate, which he is to inherit entirely if the son-heir does not appear within three years. When the son does appear, the cousin drugs him and intends to keep him prisoner in an attic lest he claim his father's estate. Only the efforts of a detective tracing the son's disappearance permit this situation to work out favorably. Brother fights even brother to gain control of an inheritance. This application of the formula seems founded on the folklore motif that half-brothers are almost natural enemies. Ingraham's The King of Crooks²² details a double plot against an heir. In his will an elderly father has left

²¹ The Artist Detective; or, Hugh Huntington's High Handed Game. A Story of the Mystery of Surf Spray Hotel, BW, XII, Nos. 607-612 (June 30-August 4, 1894).

²² The King of Crooks; or, The Fugitive Detective, BW, VII, No. 356-VIII, No. 368 (September 7-November 30, 1889).

nine-tenths of his estate to his son by his first wife and only one-tenth to his son by his second wife. The father, however, had never filled in the names of the sons because he was not sure that his first son was still alive. The father dies, therefore, leaving a will with blank spaces for the heirs' names. The second son, knowing the heir is alive, begins his plot to gain the fortune by framing the elder son for a robbery. After apparently ridding himself of competition, the wicked younger son bribes the lawyer to insert his own name into that clause of the will which confers the nine-tenths of the estate and otherwise to alter the will so that he alone appears to be the intended heir. The plots are foiled only because the "framed" brother escapes from jail and comes disguised to New York to establish his own position as heir.

III. From Rags to Riches

Heroes and heroines, it seems, never marry for money, but a heroine's happy marriage always includes money. Beadle stories make a point of keeping marriages socially suitable by giving status to hero and heroine and by treating a commoner's rise to wealth as a matter of condescension. An illustration is found in Charles Morris's brief Only a Circus Rider.²³ Will Bryant, a member of "a rich and proud family," rescues Nell Brown from the advances of a

²³Only a Circus Rider; or, Reading a Riddle, SJ, XIII, Nos. 653-654 (September 16-23, 1882). Repeated in BW, IX, Nos. 457-458 (August 15-22, 1891).

drunk and escorts her to the humble flat she shares with her mother. During the next month he finds himself falling in love with Nell, much against his better judgment, knowing that the girl is not a suitable match for him. But he also doubts the girl's respectability because she has a job that keeps her out late at night. About a month after his first meeting with Nell, Will and his friends attend a circus where they see girl bareback riders attired "in a scanty allowance of muslin and tinsel." Will is shocked to discover that Nell is the star of the show, even though she is "dressed . . . far more modestly than her predecessors." The two eventually marry, of course, but not until the family is "quite ready to forgive her" for her background.

Only in a few rare instances, however, does a heroine not an heiress rise in society by marrying into wealth. Usually it must be discovered that the heroine has a fortune of her own. Aiken offers this theme with a "twist" when in Helen Home²⁴ a wealthy suitor disguises himself to court an orphan in order that she may not love him only for his money. In the last chapter, however, the orphan is discovered to be the long-lost daughter and heiress of a deceased millionaire. Mrs. Victor tells almost the same story in Little Claire, the Opera Singer.²⁵ A supposedly orphaned singer in an opera house chorus loves a wealthy man, who in turn is more

²⁴Helen Home; or, The Adventures of a Poor Girl. A Mystery of Central Park, SJ, XIII, Nos. 635-648 (May 13-August 12, 1882). Repeated in BW, VIII, Nos. 392-405 (May 17-August 16, 1890).

²⁵Little Claire, the Opera Singer; or, The Strange Guardian, SJ, XI, Nos. 524-535 (March 27-June 12, 1880). Repeated in BW, XIII, Nos. 648-660 (April 13-July 6, 1895).

interested in two other women. The novel traces Claire's rise from the chorus to her debut as Marguerite in Gounod's Faust. Her successful debut is climaxed by the revelation that she is in reality the daughter of a man who had deserted his wife and had subsequently made a fortune in South America. Once Claire's family background is established, her reluctant wealthy suitor becomes devoted to her.

Even when an affluent suitor is unwilling to allow his better judgment to stand in the way of a love match, it is usual for the poor orphan girl to refuse his proposals until she can clear the mystery of her parentage. Forty times within two months Edmund Kelford, the wealthy suitor of Aiken's The Heart of Fire,²⁶ visits a seamstress' shop and makes trivial purchases just to glimpse Pearl, the orphan he silently loves. But a wealthy married woman also loves Edmund and is willing to go so far as to divorce her husband in order to marry him. When she discovers that Pearl is really her own half-sister, she dies of shock. The poor seamstress, having discovered that she is well born, is now willing to marry Edmund, who accepts her in spite of the fact that she is penniless.

Beadle writers could even turn the formula upside down and come up with a happy ending. In The Black Riddle²⁷ Mrs. Victor has Eugene, the wealthy owner of Morley Beeches, fall in love with Oriole, the

²⁶The Heart of Fire; or, Mother versus Daughter. A Revelation of Chicago Life, SJ, I, Nos. 30-42 (October 8-December 31, 1870).

²⁷The Black Riddle; or, Girlish Charms and Golden Dowers. A Story of Morley Beeches, SJ, XI, Nos. 538-551 (July 3-October 2, 1880).

steward's daughter. In the course of the novel it becomes known that the suitor has no right to the estate, that all the money and property of the estate had belonged to his stepmother, that his father had forged the will that gave Eugene his false inheritance, and that his stepmother's true will grants the estate to her own son by a previous marriage. Oriele and Eugene, both penniless, decide to marry anyhow. The money problem is solved, however, when the old steward, having accumulated his own horde from cautious speculation, gives his daughter \$100,000 as a wedding present.

A second type of rags-to-riches tale deals with a boy's rise to wealth. Undoubtedly influenced by the popularity of Horatio Alger's formula which traced a poor, virtuous, and industrious boy's rise from the streets to wealth, Beadle's tales, most of them contributed by Charles Morris and Frederick Whittaker between 1876 and 1895, reflect the contemporary industrial scene. A bit of historical background will clarify the labor setting of these tales. The 1870's were a decade of depression, reduced wages, and futile strikes. Most conspicuous and notorious among the episodes of these ten years were the strikes of 1874 and 1875 in the Pennsylvania coal fields and the subsequent nationwide railroad strikes. The coal strikes were highlighted with violent and even criminal attempts at strike-breaking. Anti-labor mine management held out until starving miners were forced to return to work for smaller wages than they earned before they walked off their jobs.

The spontaneous strikes of 1877 resulted in partial or complete paralysis of every railroad line east of the Mississippi and most

lines in other parts of the country. Consequent riots had to be quelled by joint forces of militia, policemen, and firemen. Popular feeling was with the workers, but sympathy was tempered by the opinion that it was not impossible to sustain life on one or two dollars a day and that if railroad employees were unwilling to work for such wages they had no right to prevent others from taking over their jobs. The attitude, therefore, seemed to be that capital was within its rights to set the conditions of labor, to lock out or blacklist strikers, and to replace strikers with "scabs."

After the turbulent strike years the union movement began to gain force. The Knights of Labor, founded in 1869, attempted to form one large union powerful enough to exert an influence in any strike. Its future seemed bright enough; between 1878 and 1885 the membership rose from 9,287 to more than 100,000. But during the eighties the Knights suffered greatly from a series of unsuccessful strikes, and the failure of the organization to win its way led to its precipitate decline.²⁸

Such were the times in which were written the Beadle tales of a boy's rise to wealth through industry. The archetypal tale of this group can well be Whittaker's John Armstrong, Mechanic,²⁹ not

²⁸This summary of the labor movement temper is drawn from Foster Rhea Dulles, Labor in America: A History (New York, 1949), pp. 95-165, and Samuel Yellen, American Labor Struggles (New York, 1936), pp. 3-71.

²⁹John Armstrong, Mechanic; or, From the Bottom to the Top of the Ladder. A Story of How a Man Can Rise in America, BeW, I, Nos. 1-12 (November 18, 1882-February 3, 1883).

only because it is a detailed account of a boy's rise to the top, but also because the engraving that accompanied its first installment is a pictorial summary of the rags-to-riches novel. Shown in the center of the 7 x 9 1/4 inch cut is a young iron worker climbing a ladder aptly labelled EXCELSIOR [sic]--the name, it happens, of the company he works for. In the lower corners are two insets, one of a youth sweeping a floor, the other of the same lad riveting a boiler. Further insets in the upper corners depict a fashionable church wedding and a successful candidate taking the oath of a high political office.

In the story Armstrong, a teen-aged country boy, is discharged after two days' work at Excelsior Iron Works because he defended Ella Morton from the advances of the owner's drunken nephew. The owner admires John's spunk; but since he must choose between his own nephew and a stranger, he recommends John for a place in another plant. Within two days John is foreman of riveters. In two years he is assistant superintendent.

Meanwhile, his acquaintance with Ella develops into affection. She encourages John to improve himself by attending night school. She herself helps polish his manners and speech. During a strike at the factory John sides with the workers and wins their demands for them. When after the strike John is made manager of the works, Mrs. Morton gives up her social objections to John as a son-in-law, and the two lovers marry.

Some four years later John foils and exposes a board member's embezzlement plot. When the revelation forces a change in board

personnel, John Armstrong is the obvious choice for the presidency of the firm. But John's rise is not complete until he agrees to run on a reform ticket for mayor of New York and wins the election.

From sweeper to iron works president to mayor within ten years is surely a rise to wealth and prestige romantically exaggerated. But Whittaker ends his tale with two admonitions. If a reader wishes to know more of John Armstrong's story, he may "read it in the real life of . . . many a man like him in America." The further admonition is encouragement to industriousness.

Look up, then, workman of the land, man with the muscle hardened by labor, brain trained in the struggle for life. In America everything is possible for a workingman.

Whittaker repeated the formula several times. Within two years after the appearance of John Armstrong Whittaker told of a carpenter who becomes an officer of two large carriage factories and succeeds in merging them; of a printer's devil who acquires his own newspaper, marries his former boss's daughter, and is elected first to state legislature and then to Congress; of a blacksmith who eventually runs his own carriage factory and marries the pretty school teacher who inspired him to better himself; and of a teen-aged mill hand who becomes manager of the mill.

Sixteen of the twenty-one story paper novels Charles Morris wrote for Beadle and Adams concern a boy's rise to wealth and position. Most of the tales are of a piece. A teen-aged, fast-talking, quick-witted, poorly-dressed street urchin rises from a menial laborer to a respectable manager, helped along the way usually by

a girl of high station who polishes the boy's manners and improves his tastes. More often than not, however, the boy's rise is determined or at least aided by a sudden opportunity, usually his discovering some unlawful practice, often on the part of his employers. Morris's boys capture counterfeiters, reunite heroines with their parents, lead their elders in rooting out a band of smugglers, uncover their employers' embezzling, expose crooked trustees, and capture numbers of miscellaneous thieves. Phil Hardy, hero of Morris's The Boss Boy,³⁰ is typical of the lot. He justifies his ebullience by the explanation, "My tongue gets loose sometimes, and it's just the hardest thing a-goin to nail it down. Got to let off exhaust steam, you know." After the successful conclusion of his adventures, which include his saving the heroine from a cousin's plot to steal her fortune, the author leaves him a prosperous young business man "grown into a tall, shapely youth, always neatly dressed, and his old slipshod speech corrected by the influence of several years of school life."

The heroes in both Morris's and Whittaker's tales always win their way over the domineering rich. Almost every story has at least one scene involving some confrontation between the artisan-laborer and the leisure class. In Morris's Rattling Hal, the Prince of 'Prentices, for example, a bank officer barges into a locksmith's shop and demands that the proprietor come at once to open a vault

³⁰The Boss Boy; or, The Mystery of the Strongbow, SJ, VIII, Nos. 405-413 (December 15, 1877-February 9, 1878).

which has been inadvertently closed and time-locked. To counter the customer's domineering and condescending attitude the locksmith demands a fee of one hundred dollars. When the customer blusters at the outrageous price, the locksmith raises his fee fifty dollars. Of course, the locksmith has his way; the banker must meet the price if he is to get his vault opened. The locksmith then advises him about manners.

"The next time you step into an honest mechanic's shop, just leave your haughty ways behind you. Remember that there are gentlemen in leather aprons as well as in broadcloth coats, and that a smith may be as proud of his business as a bank president. You've given fifty dollars now for your 'good man' and 'common mechanic' talk. If you'd tried any more airs, I wouldn't have done the job for all your money."³¹

An additional element of such tales is the capitalists' exploitation of labor. In this context the owner who fires an industrious lad for fighting his nephew is a fictional relative of the owner involved in a shady transaction. The laissez-faire capitalist who favors his relatives and leads a questionable private life is usually hardhearted enough to be utterly unfeeling about his workers' welfare. The wicked mill owner in Morris's The Boy Cripple Detectives,³² confronted with a law suit for damages resulting from a mill accident in which one young boy lost an arm

³¹Charles Morris, Rattling Hal, the Prince of 'Prentices; or, The Old Locksmith's Secret, BeW, III, No. 148-IV, No. 160 (September 12-December 5, 1885).

³²The Boy Cripple Detectives; or, The Millionaire Mill-Owner's Freeze-Out. The Romance of the Great Patent Fraud, BW, XIII, Nos. 628-634 (November 24, 1894-January 5, 1895).

and another boy a leg, coerces mill hands who witnessed the accident to testify that the boys were at fault and also attempts to bribe the plaintiffs' attorney. The honest jury, however, awards each boy \$25,000. Further adventures reveal that the mill owner had stolen certain valuable patent rights from the father of one of the limbless heroes.

Such rags-to-riches tales as we have just discussed seem to represent a sugar-coating of the labor temper of the times. Because it was poor business practice for story papers to dabble in politics, writers carefully adopted a middle-of-the-road position. Radical elements among the labor forces were dealt with as if they were ordinary villains. Such agitators were disposed of by the more conservative labor group or imprisoned for crimes having nothing to do inherently with the labor question. Nor is capitalism seriously compromised by these tales, for management is never represented as all bad. The villainous mill owner or embezzling manager is evil not only in his cruel or cheating business dealings, but also in his private life where his faults, like those of any villain, range from desertion of a wife to abduction of the heroine. But in the background, ready to act when the wicked owner or manager is found out, stands a kindly board of directors or a benevolent partner. According to the middle-of-the-road story-paper policy, a weeding out of radicals among the workers is always balanced by a realignment of management. The story paper world of labor and capital is peopled by heroes and villains, but it is also a world where distributive social justice ultimately prevails.

In this context, then, the hero's rise from the ranks to a high position in management is a fictional representation of an ideal relationship between capital and labor wherein capital recognizes a man's potential and abides by the rules of fair play.

I V. The Domestic Formula

It should be quite apparent that the ethos of the domestic society depicted in story-paper tales is founded basically upon two principles: money and social status. As ideals of attainment these are perennial middle-class aims expressed in fiction since the eighteenth century. But for all the blackness of villains and uprightness of heroes and heroines, they hardly live in a world which can be so neatly labelled. For, indeed, they live in the romantic world of Moll Flanders and Pamela as well as the world of David Copperfield, wherein live good wealthy men and villainous wealthy men, virtuous maidens and jealous maidens. And in this world of both eighteenth and nineteenth century fiction wealth and position are eminently desirable; but once attained the wealth must be used generously and benevolently, and position must never be a means of illicit gain or of exploitation of the less fortunate. For such abuses of one's good fortune constitute an abuse of mankind.

But since the Beadle tales claim to be novels of real American life, they assume almost because of their very structure an anomalous position in American society of the time. For though structured in

the frame of romantic formula, the story-paper novels propose to be realistic. They attempt to present life as it really is, yet they never sacrifice the first popular romantic principle that good must conquer evil, that virtue must endure and be rewarded.

Mary Noel's extended discussion of "Story Paper Sociology"³³ points out that domestic novels never fail to provide the proper and expected resolution for difficulties of love, marriage, wealth, family, position, and parentage. And for all the display of crime and skulduggery, the novels remain stringently decorous in matters of female virtue. Moreover, the story-paper respect for the taboos against detailing illicit love affairs, seductions, or any sort of unwedded bliss leads to a catalogue of stock devices which become part of the formula.

Were it not for the observance of proprieties already established in pre-realistic popular fiction, the popular novel in general and the story paper in particular would never have had to lean upon the devices of mock marriages, forced marriages, lost marriage records, secret marriages, or long-lost legitimate children. The very fact, furthermore, that such devices were necessary led to the entire complex of plot situations found in the novels, since there was in this romantic fictional world no license for mentioning seduction or casual love affairs, there arose the necessity of explaining away suspected bastardy, and the associated problems of the legal rights of children, of wills lost or forged, of jealousy

³³Noel, op. cit., pp. 169-179.

and rivalry between half-brothers and half-sisters. Since there was, moreover, no place for bigamy or for divorce, the evil perpetrators of forced or deceptive marriages had to be disposed of by death, thereby freeing the widowed heroine for a happy marriage with her faithful lover.

In addition, the sexual ethic of popular fiction compelled writers and editors to make villainous murderers stop short of forcing physical attentions upon the unwilling heroines, brides or not. Such an ethical assumption led to a situation in Duke Despard, wherein the heroine willingly married the villain who was blackmailing her father for his criminal past. The pure heroine set a condition, however, that though a bride, she must not be claimed for a year as a wife in fact. When the villain was killed in a duel, the wife-in-name only was not only a widow but a virgin bride to the man she really loved. Lovely maidens were not even forced to submit to lecherous kisses in these novels. A glance at the resumé of The Winged Messenger at the beginning of this chapter will show that the heroine was rescued just before she was forced to submit. Even when no rescuers were at hand, heroines were saved from disgrace by convenient fainting spells. In general, most heroines were virgins untainted by forced kisses when at the end of the novel they married their heroes.

If death did not dispose of the villain, or if death was not necessary to make the heroine a widow or to serve as punishment for abduction or mock marriage, the villain was forced at least to

confess his wrongs. The villain in Mrs. Crowell's The Counterfeit Son could have been reading a prepared statement.

"I am guilty--guilty ten thousand fold, but the retribution I have always secretly feared has overtaken me at last . . . I deserve the utmost punishment the law can inflict. I have wronged, cheated, and robbed Dr. Dudley. I have imposed upon innocent Maud Owen, and would have dared marry her, with a wife already. Let me be arrested and taken at once where I deserve to be taken."³⁴

And even a villainous woman had to confess her wrongs.

"The end has come, Otis . . . and I won't trouble you any more with my love. That bad man urged me on; I listened to his counsel and was lost. He intended to murder, or at least disable you to-night. I bought the old villain over to my side and he betrayed him, and I have saved you, and paid a price for it too, but I don't regret it; it is better thus. Don't forget me very quick, for oh, Bub, I love you so much!"³⁵

It should be noticed that there was no room for sympathy with a male villain. He was all along a plotter fully aware of the evil he was about, motivated by lust and greed. The female villain, however, usually had a grievance. The dying woman quoted above was motivated by unrequited love and the revenge it inspired. But she had to be removed from the scene to leave the hero free for his happy marriage.

³⁴The Counterfeit Son; or, The Enemy in the Dark, BeW, I, Nos. 1-20 (November 18, 1882-March 31, 1883).

³⁵Aiken, The Winning Oar; or, The Innkeeper's Daughter. A Story of Boston and of Cambridge, of the College Boys of Harvard, etc., SJ, IX, Nos. 445-458 (September 21-December 21, 1878).

The outcome of tales dominated by a formula eventually becomes predictable to a large number of readers. Therefore, interest must be sustained by some ingredient other than plot alone. One method novelists relied upon most consistently was the old melodramatic device of continual hazard and suspense. The difference between a serial with six installments and another with sixteen often lay only in the number of escapes, abductions, rescues, and attempted murders occurring in the two stories. The episodic "chase structure," with each installment ending at a crucial point, simply withholds the obvious solution for several months.

How then did these supposedly realistic and original novels acquire the realism and originality they claimed for themselves? Mary Noel suggests that the novels could offer variety only by a change in setting.³⁶ The statement is true as far as it goes. Beadle writers put their formulas to work in all the large cities of the day--New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans--and in any number of actual small towns. Scenes take place in localities that any visitor to the big cities knew--the Brooklyn ferry, the Battery, the Washington railroad depot--or in general localities that prompt a reader's recognition--the docks, a main street called by its name, a Broadway theater. In addition, a reader was treated to stories taking place on shipboard, on trains, or in a circus. Characters were at their work as bankers, merchants, attorneys, bareback riders,

³⁶Noel, op. cit., p. 169.

telegraphers, artists, farmers, flower girls, seamstresses, clerks, sweepers, mill hands, boiler makers, cobblers, blacksmiths, swindlers, forgers, pawnbrokers, counts, or vagabonds. Realism was offered, furthermore, by the local color that comes from speech characteristics of racial and national dialects. The reader, therefore, encounters Germans, Irishmen, Jews, Italians, Frenchmen, and Negroes each speaking a dialect varying from a consistent transliteration of dialectal sounds to an occasional "caramba" or "par bleu." This is variety. But it is the kind of variety that only brings us back to the "It's-a-Small-World" theme; for no matter who or where the characters are, their problems are similar.

But variety of setting is not in itself originality. Originality, therefore, became novelty, any "gimmick" that would provide the reader with something apparently new, surprising, or sensational. Often "originality" meant merely making the tangle of blood relationship more complex, so that the unravelling of the problem was more difficult for both the characters and the readers. Or the tale might introduce, according to the Gothic tradition, a mysterious ghost-like character who reappears at crucial moments to protect the heroine. The mysterious one is always identified at the end as an important character who is exercising in disguise some form of revenge upon the villain. (Aiken's The White Witch³⁷ is typical of this kind of novelty.)

³⁷The White Witch; or, The League of Three. A Strange Story of American Life, SJ, I, No. 49-II, No. 62 (February 18-May 13, 1871).

One of the more sensational Gothic devices introduced into the tales is the grotesque character. According to a practice as old as Scott's novels and still evident today in any horror motion picture, he is often no more than a servant who adds to an otherwise already eerie atmosphere. Anthony Morris specialized in introducing grotesque characters into domestic situations, both as secondary figures and as important persons in disguise. In The Beautiful Sphinx a typical grotesque figure called "the Spider" appears in almost every installment. He is a dwarf, hardly four feet tall, dressed entirely in black, with a face like that of a fiend,

yellow, dark, set with glaring orbs, shaggy brows, a few bristling hairs on the pointed chin, and wearing a savage wolfish expression. From under the cape, reaching fully to the knees, were dangling arms terminating in brown, hairy hands, one of which held a cone-fashioned hat; and above the cape, over the low forehead and around the prominent ears, a mass of raven-hued and tangled locks grew neglectedly. Beneath the broadened nostrils was an impish grin, that displayed irregular, projecting, discolored teeth; and like a hewn statue, devilish and frightful it confronted them.³⁸

The Spider's sensational demeanor and his presence in the story is explained at the very end, when the reader discovers that he is really the hero using a disguise to help him track down the murderer of his father.

In the same vein of sensationalism is the appearance of ghosts, ghostly objects, or the working out of curses. The extranatural

³⁸Anthony Morris, The Beautiful Sphinx; or, The Man-Spider of Wirthmoor. A Tale of Early St. Louis, SJ, V, Nos. 237-248 (September 26-December 12, 1874).

devices have their place only in so far as they can be explained rationally. As such the devices are part of the gothic tradition in English and American literature. No ghostly person or object is a ghost in fact, and the practice is an attempt at sensational and novel extension of the disguise device.

The themes and devices discussed in this chapter were not used exclusively in domestic novels. The following chapters discuss these formulas as they reappear, essentially unaltered, in the Beadle story-paper western and detective tales.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BEADLE WESTERN TALE; OR, HEROES IN BUCKSKIN AND VELVET

They were good men and true, most of them, a gathering of humanity only to be found in our own land, and here alone upon the frontier or in the Wild West.

- Prentiss Ingraham, Buffalo Bill's Grim Guard; or, The Chinaman in Buckskin, Banner Weekly, XIV, Nos. 677-690 (November 2, 1895-February 1, 1896).

The years of the Beadle papers were a time of ever mounting interest in the West. The post-Civil War reconstruction brought in its wake new migrations toward the sunset across the continent. The veterans, the homeless, the victors, and the despoiled looked now to the open land. And after the Civil War a move west did not necessarily mean the loss of contact with the world "back home" that migrants had been forced to accept in earlier days. Gone were the days of the expensive Pony Express. After October, 1861, a telegraph line spanned the land. Gone also, or almost gone, were the days of long and dangerous trips in the sturdy but bouncing and vulnerable Conestogas. The day of the iron wagon was at hand. In 1869 the first transcontinental railroad was completed.

The world was made smaller by the transcontinental telegraph and railroad. But much of that world was still unknown. Almost all the western half of the American world was not only unknown but dangerous. True, the land had been organized into federal territories--all but what we know today as Oklahoma, which remained Indian Territory, under federal control but unorganized. But the Indian was not yet subdued; and the road agent robbed and killed with a freedom proportionate to the lack of organized law in the area of his operation.

This then was the period during which the Beadle story papers were published. With the admission of Nebraska to the Union in 1867, the frontier came some three hundred miles nearer to being

closed. In 1867, too, the United States purchased Alaska from Russia, an acquisition regarded until the twentieth century as folly. When the first issue of the Saturday Journal appeared in March, 1870, there were thirty-seven states. Before the last issue of the Banner Weekly appeared in May, 1897, eight more states were added to the Union. In 1889 alone four states--Montana, Washington, North Dakota, South Dakota--were admitted, more than had been added in any single year since 1788. Other post-war additions to the Union were Colorado (1876), Idaho (1890), Wyoming (1890), and Utah (1896). After years as an unorganized territory, an unnamed central plot became in 1890 Oklahoma Territory. When the Banner Weekly died in May 1897, only three continental territories--Arizona, New Mexico, and Alaska--had not yet become states.

Naturally the West became a subject for story-paper fiction just as it had become a chief topic of conversation, debate, argument, and dreams. As an unknown land, the West was romantic. As an unconquered wilderness, it offered the adventurous pioneer new domains to explore and settle. The mineral-laden mountains offered a new enterprise for the adventurous prospector. There was gold in California, and the fabulous Comstock Lode in Nevada made millionaires of a few lucky silver miners. The adjective for the whole land was "new": new rivers for the boatman, cheap new land for the farmer, new cities for the merchant, banker, saloon keeper, gambler, and prostitute, new grazing land for the cattleman and sheep-herder, new wealth for the hopeful speculator, new victims for the bandit.

Offering their city-bound readers factual accounts of life on the frontier and in the wilderness, the Beadle papers supplied the young stay-at-home pioneer a supposedly informative introduction to the experiences he himself would encounter. The boy heroes of these "true" accounts apparently were to inspire readers with the courage and daring necessary to strike out boldly into the unknown. Even the New York mountains were wilderness to an urban easterner. Whittaker recounted anecdotes and reminiscences of a hunting trip in the Catskills.¹ The adventures of his boy heroes brought eastern readers vicariously into contact with "wild" country close to home and at the same time instructed them in techniques of hunting, trapping, and outdoor living. An account of Joseph Badger's took readers to the more adventure-filled plains with teen-aged heroes on a buffalo hunt.² Such series on "sport and adventure in the Wild West" were offered as a guide to "the fun, romance, and reality of the sportsman's life."³ The adventures of young heroes, furthermore, were intended to give "boy readers . . . who reside far from the trapping-grounds some idea of what . . . sports we Western boys have."⁴

¹ Woods and Waters; or, The Rambles of the Littleton Gun Club, SJ, VIII, Nos. 401-412 (November 17, 1877-February 2, 1878).

² Buffalo Hunters; or, Haps and Mishaps of Amateurs, SJ, V, Nos. 211-218 (March 28-May 16, 1874).

³ SJ, VII, No. 348 (November 11, 1876), 3.

⁴ Badger, On the Prairie; or, The Adventures of Amateur Hunters, SJ, IV, Nos. 167-176 (May 24-July 26, 1873).

These pseudo-autobiographical accounts are of their nature episodic; each installment is an entity--a portage, a chase, a stalking, or a peril escaped. Based upon purportedly actual events and set in sufficiently atmospheric locales, these diary-like accounts represented actuality. But the fiction also proposed to present actuality itself. Readers were repeatedly told that they were reading truth. Footnotes averred that the duel, rescue, battle, or robbery had actually happened, that the minor character who had just acted was historical and was, as a matter of fact, still alive. Ingraham's tales, based as most of them are on Buffalo Bill and his adventures, were regularly offered as historical accounts--though in justice it must be admitted that his squibs like "The Foundation of Fiction is Reality"⁵ do not swear to the historicity of the adventures recounted. As in the domestic tale, the reality often lies in the local color which may have little or nothing to do with the plot itself. The reader is introduced to miners, cowhands, stage drivers, prospectors, hermits, trappers, and any number of other characters found in any typical western setting. Heroes and heroines speak perfect English, of course, because they have come from the East. Many "color" characters, as in the domestic novel, are nationality types who speak with their supposedly appropriate inflections. Ingraham's Chinese characters, for example, always caricatures, are given lines like "'Muchee funnee, muchee queeree;

⁵Custer's Shadow; or, The Red Tomahawk, BW, V, Nos. 247-259 (August 6-October 29, 1887).

lovee makee Melican man madee, makee Melican girlee sickee, velly goodee for Chinaman; Melican folkee allee damee foolee allee samee.⁶ It should be noted in passing that this particular Chinese is permitted to swear--a concession never made to a story-paper Caucasian. Genuine western or westernized characters are made to speak with a semblance of an accent, at least; and what is lacking in inflection is made up for by the cant vocabulary. Davy Crockett in a rare appearance in Beadle's serials is made to utter lines like:

"Why, you're in love with this 'greaser' gal, the darter of that sour old cuss, Bandera, the big dog round this hyer clearin'. Over head an' ears in love, an' your feet stuck in the mud so fast that nothin' on airth 'cept the gal's lips, a fat priest, an' a weddin'-ring will ever pull you out of it."⁷

The story-paper West is, furthermore, a violent world of saloons and gambling halls, of gun fights and brawls, a world with a code by which "the man who succeeds in getting the drop on his opponent is justified in firing the moment he can bring his weapon to bear."⁸ It is a world wherein all men, heroes and villains, take a drink and even a high principled man is not above committing what

⁶Velvet Face, the Border Bravo; or Muriel, the Danite's Bride. The Romance of a Border Mystery, SJ, XII, Nos. 582-593 (May 7-July 23, 1881).

⁷Aiken, The Red Mazeppa; or, The Madman of the Plains. A Strange Story of the Texan Frontier, SJ, II, No. 102-III, No. 116 (February 24-June 1, 1872).

⁸Aiken, The Cohort of Five; or, Dick Talbot's Great Clean-Out. The Romance of a Just Vengeance, BW, VI, Nos. 267-279 (December 24, 1887-March 17, 1888).

the East would call a crime if a good end is served by it.

But in fiction this West is neither all violence nor devoid of law. There is, for one thing, a moral tone in all stories that offsets and neutralizes the tone of rugged individualism and brutality. Heroes may get the drop on their enemies, but seldom do they shoot if a less bloody solution to the immediate problem is possible. Mingled with such action is moralizing in the form of rough and ready axioms. "The pistol is well enough in its place," a Whittaker hero philosophizes, "but that place is not to settle little quarrels over trifles. The men that are always ready to appeal to it in such cases have nothing left when a grand emergency comes."⁸ The same hero later observes, " . . . the trouble is that, when a man thinks he can out-shoot anybody around him, the pistol becomes an implement of tyranny worse than brute strength."⁹ All story-paper western heroes use their pistols only in defense. All have the fastest draw, but never the itchiest finger. No hero ever cheats at cards, drinks to excess or has dishonorable intentions toward women. Neither hero nor villain ever uses base or vulgar language. No heroine is ever violated by her Indian captors, much less by her white ones.¹⁰ No woman, even a villainess, is ever morally loose, much less a prostitute. It is, therefore,

⁸Solid Sol, the Yankee Hercules; or, A New Hampshire Tramp in Texas, BW, IV, Nos. 178-191 (April 10-July 10, 1886).

¹⁰Pearson approaches this captivity motif humorously. Cf. Dime Novels, pp. 36-37.

a rough and tumble world where the rules against brutality are liberal, but where social manners come from the book of eastern etiquette. The story-paper compromise, therefore, necessitates some extended euphemism in Aiken's Captain Volcano when he describes what was obviously a brothel in San Diego of the 1850's.

With the gold-seekers had come the birds of prey that thrived and fattened upon them. Dance and gambling-houses abounded, but the big affair of the town was the Fandango Hall . . . An enterprising Mexican had erected a huge shanty on the outskirts of the town; put a bar and an orchestra . . . in one end; employed some fifteen or sixteen girls, who were always ready to dance for the asking, and who were supposed to be visitors, the daughters of the aristocracy of the town, by the guileless miners who knew no better, and as a natural consequence the Fandango Hall never lacked for patrons from eight in the evening until midnight. Then, too, quite a number of the girls of the town, young women some of them, no better than they should be, visited the popular place for amusement; so that San Diego, at the time of this gold craze, was fully supplied with "attractions," and if a man wanted to while away an hour or two pleasantly in the evening, he was always sure of "fun" by going to Don Ramon's ranch.¹¹

The girls are, moreover, story-paper counterparts of the modern B-girls, who ply their companions with watered liquor and earn a commission for every bottle they sell, but they are well-behaved and sexless. Even Calamity Jane, "the most mannish woman the West ever knew,"¹² is to the story paper "irreproachable in her woman's purity, and . . . an anomaly--a rara avis, who might well be the heroine of romance."¹³ Edward L. Wheeler, in fact, makes her the bride of Deadwood Dick, a hero of Beadle's "Dime Library."

¹¹Captain Volcano; or, The Man of the Red Revolvers, SJ, XI, No. 561-XII, No. 573 (December 11, 1880-March 5, 1881).

¹²BW, XIV, No. 688 (January 18, 1896), 3.

¹³BW, XIV, No. 680 (November 23, 1895), 4.

Mary Noel's statement that variety in story-paper serials comes only from a change in setting assumes a new significance when we acknowledge that many western stories are peopled by eastern characters with eastern manners and eastern problems. But even stories dealing with specifically western problems fall into only a few limited categories. According to Frank Gruber, writers of western stories in our own time recognize seven basic "Western story plots" which cover any western situation. First is "The Union Pacific Story." This category includes any stories dealing with the construction or operation of a railroad, telegraph line, stagecoach line, or toll road; or with the wagon trains moving westward. The second classification, "The Ranch Story," includes any stories set on ranches; stories of rustlers, of cattle drives, of the war between cattlemen and sheepmen, of the war between ranchmen and squatters. The third western plot concerns "The Empire Story." Frequently elements of the ranch plot or Union Pacific plot appear in an "Empire" story, but in the latter both people and setting assume a grand scale. The ranchman is a cattle baron, the town a boom town, the ranch "of tremendous size." Fourth is "The Revenge Story" which recounts the protagonist's devotion to vengeance. The hero of this chase story might spend months and even years pursuing his enemy. Fifth is "Custer's Last Stand," any cavalry-and-Indian story. The sixth classification is "The Outlaw Story," in which any outlaw, real or fictitious, is a principal character. The last type is the opposite of the sixth,

"The Marshal Story," in which any lawman, real or fictitious, is a principal character.¹⁴

But compared with tales produced in story-paper days modern westerns exhibit boundless variety. Perhaps modern readers and television viewers tempted to complain about lack of variety in current western stories might do well to discover that story-paper westerns fell into only three or four plot classifications. Today's emphasis on psychological realism was utterly absent. Many serials were set on ranches, but the ranch story assumed little importance beyond setting. And there were no tales about western law-men or bad-men of history. The three conventional plots that go back to story-paper days are the revenge story, the cavalry-and-Indians story, and the outlaw story. But these plots were always subordinate to the usual plot of the domestic novel, for few were the novels that ended without a hero's or heroine's reunion with relatives, without some character's discovering his or her parentage, without at least one wedding.

Indeed, a love story was essential to any story-paper western novel. Necessarily, therefore, western heroines were every bit as beautiful as their eastern sisters. Even in the roughest, toughest mining town the pretty heroine was "fair as Diana . . . and as chaste, too, for no man could boast of favors received" from her.¹⁵ Pure as the heroine was, however, writers exercise some freedom of

¹⁴Frank Gruber, "The 7 Ways to Plot a Western," TV Guide, VI (August 30, 1958), 5-7.

¹⁵Aiken, Gold Dan; or, The White Savages of the Great Salt Lake. A Terrible Tale of the Danites of Mormon Land, SJ, VIII, Nos. 400-411 (November 10, 1877-January 26, 1878).

description with girls west of the Mississippi seldom apparent in the eastern novel. Ingraham furnishes a typical picture when he describes a heroine as "slender," "graceful," "agile," and "fancifully attired in leggins, short skirt [above the knees], and tight-fitting bodice."¹⁶

Placing women, beautiful heroines or not, in a western setting raised problems of decorum that did not exist in the domestic setting, for the West was a man's world in which a woman's virtue was ever in danger. It was also the domain of the Indian, who was thought incapable of gentlemanly conduct. Although no maiden taken captive in a story paper tale is ever dishonored, captivity is always spoken of as a fate worse than death. A novel by Buffalo Bill, for example, has Texas Jack Omohundro vow to save a captured maiden. So terrible is her plight, he says, that "If I cannot save her I will kill her, rather than have her meet the fate that awaits her there!"¹⁷ Indian captivity, it seems, was but one degree worse than abduction by and forced marriage to a villainous suitor. No pure heroine is willing to submit to such a man's advances. Another novel by Cody offers an example of the heroine's fervent chastity.

"Victorine, I demand that you forsake that man [the hero] and come with me. For two years I have tracked you, and now I will not give you up," said

¹⁶Buffalo Bill, the Buckskin King; or, Wild Nell, the Amazon of the West. A Life Romance of the Great American Scout, SJ, X, Nos. 507-518 (November 29, 1879-February 14, 1880).

¹⁷Texas Jack, the Prairie Rattler; or, The Queen of the Wild Riders. A Romance in the Life of a Real Hero . . . , BeW, I, Nos. 40-50 (August 18-October 27, 1883).

Clarence Gilmore, and the glitter in his eyes proved that he was in deadly earnest.

"Before I would go with you, Clarence Gilmore, I will die by my own hand--nay, I will ask Harold Meredith to take my life."¹⁸

Even villainous women are decorous. In a novel by Oll Coomes the evil woman is ultimately exposed as an ally of Belle Starr. At one point of the novel, after being foiled and rebuked, "she turned her horse, flung back a curse at the couple, and dashed away down the trail." The woman is capable of masculine strong language and hard riding, but the illustration depicting the incident shows her very modestly riding side-saddle.¹⁹

The necessity of keeping women pure in a savage world led to a new exploitation of the disguise devices treated in the previous chapter of this study. Unlike the woman who practises medicine disguised as a man because of the prejudice against women doctors, western heroines disguise themselves to protect their chastity. Their motives for assuming a disguise, however, are much the same as those of eastern heroines. In Ingraham's Captain Crimson, the Man of the Iron Face the heroine disguises herself to travel west to track down the lover who deserted her.²⁰ In another Ingraham

¹⁸Gold Bullet Sport; or, The Knights of Chivalry, SJ, X, Nos. 472-481 (March 29-May 31, 1879).

¹⁹Saddle-King Sam. Old Kit's Adjutant; or, The Big Rustle on the P.V.L. Ranch. A Romance of the Little Missouri, BW, VII, Nos. 343-348 (June 8, July 13, 1889).

²⁰Captain Crimson, the Man of the Iron Face; or, The Nemesis of the Plains. A Romance of Love and Adventure in the "Land of the Setting Sun," SJ, XII, Nos. 573-584 (March 5-May 21, 1881).

novel, The King of Mines, the heroine of the subplot disguises her sex because she has been disgraced by a forced marriage to a gambler. Her father would have been exposed as a murderer had she refused to marry the blackmailing villain. Upon the gambler's death the girl becomes a man and attempts to cover her disgrace by beginning a new life in the West.²¹

Of course, this disguise device has to make some provision for the eventual recognition of the woman as a woman. Often she reveals her own identity after the capture or death of the villain, but in many novels the reader is told the secret before the end of the story. In such novels the hero and the reader discover the truth without the girl-man's knowledge. How to do this delicately was the big question. The solution became standard, though its delicacy is questionable. Ingraham's hero in his Dashing Dandy, the Hotspur of the Hills saves the transvested heroine from hanging and attempts to revive her from her fainting spell. He discovers the victim's sex when he opens her shirt, but chivalrously he refrains from revealing his knowledge even to the girl until at the end of the novel she herself admits the truth.²²

Hero Jack Blake of Aiken's Captain Volcano discovers the truth about robber-captain Volcano by exactly the same means. But Aiken's

²¹ The King of Mines; or, The Invincible Two. A Romance in the Career of the Life-Long Pard . . . "Buffalo Bill" and . . . "White Beaver," BW, IV, Nos. 196-208 (August 14-November 6, 1886).

²² Dashing Dandy, the Hotspur of the Hills; or, The Pony Prince's Strange Pard, SJ, XI, Nos. 543-555 (August 7-October 30, 1880).

novel stretches the delicacy of portraying a transvested woman to the point of what moderns would call a hermaphroditic description. Volcano is unwomanly in figure and temperament. Furthermore, she woos and wins women just as if she were a man, for

being strongly unwomanly, not only in her appearance but in her feelings, she has conceived that strange liking for other girls which has been known, in rare cases, to exist in the female breast:--like a man she wooed and won other women; but the victory was a barren one, and when the love she sought was given, straightway she deserted that object and transferred her attentions to another.

But Aiken does not belabor the point; in fact he softens his effect by making Volcano honorable in her courting activities. As a villain she plots to gain the estate of the alcalde of San Diego by forcing his daughter into marriage. He (she) abducts the daughter and forces her to share his cabin, but we are told that Volcano's honor prevents him from touching the unwilling bride until after the wedding. After the ceremony, Volcano honorably says he is tired of his bride and leaves her to be wooed by one of his lieutenants. Volcano is also womanly enough to blush when one of his men refers to the map of a lost mine which the captain and his officers have tattooed on their chests.

Heroines also found protection and safety in a second, but less used, disguise device. According to this convention the beautiful girl retains her sex but protects her life and virtue by becoming a ghost. Such a wraith figure appears in Whittaker's

The Rock Rider.²³ The heroine, separated from her parents who she thinks died in an Indian raid, becomes "The Spirit of the Sierra." The "Spirit," as she is known, is a beautiful woman dressed in white who roams the mountains saving white men from mountain hazards and Indian attack. In the Gothic manner she has the ability to appear at most unlikely moments and to vanish magically. In the end, of course, she explains that her feats were accomplished through her intimate knowledge of the mountains, her ability to move as noiselessly as an Indian, and her use of strategically concealed swinging ropes, rope ladders, vine bridges, and well hidden caves. The conclusion of the novel, furthermore, not only reveals the "Spirit" as a flesh-and-blood woman, but also reunites her with her still living father.

Most western heroes are copies of their eastern fictional brothers except in two respects. First, it is readily noticeable that the western romantic hero is always well born, well mannered, perfectly grammatical, and comes from the East or at least spends some time improving his manners and speech in school. Frank Buford, a hero of The Rock Rider, is an Easterner on a hunting expedition. Gilbert Vance of Aiken's The Red Mazeppa is an Easterner come to see the West. He becomes a "mustanger" accompanied in his adventures by a youngish Davy Crockett. Furthermore, the hero with the western dialect and unpolished manners is usually

²³The Rock Rider; or, The Spirit of the Sierra. A Tale of the Three Parks, SJ, III, Nos. 145-156 (December 21, 1872-March 8, 1873).

merely a hero of action, not of romance. But all western heroes are superior to Easterners in physical strength and prowess with firing arms or other mechanical means of defense. The hero of Ingraham's The Dragoon Detective is so strong that Panther Pete, the villain, "was seized in a grip of iron, dragged bodily from his feet, and hurled ten feet away upon the heads of the crowd."²⁴

Making the hero strong and invulnerable leads to long stretching of probability. In Coomes' Dashing Dick the western hero falls into a noose trap set by Indians. The captors suspend him by one foot over a chasm, some yards from any grasp. His only chance of escape is to begin swinging. But an Indian is lowered by the waist to tie up the helpless hero. At a crucial moment a panther appears on the other side of the chasm. Instead of remaining motionless, the Indian screams to be pulled back. As he moves, the panther springs at him. The additional weight breaks the vine holding the Indian; and the falling bodies strike the hero, set him swinging, and enable him to reach the ledge safely.²⁵

Almost grotesque exaggeration was inevitable if the stories were to offer any "originality," i.e., novelty. Since all romantic heroes were handsome and since, as we have seen, women often masqueraded as men, handsome males are always lavishly described, often in terms of feminine beauty, possibly only to keep the

²⁴The Dragoon Detective; or, The Darling of Destiny, BW, V, Nos. 235-247 (May 14-August 6, 1887).

²⁵Dashing Dick; or, Trapper Tom's Castle, SJ, IV, Nos. 175-181 (July 19-August 30, 1873).

reader guessing whether or not he is being confronted with a girl in disguise. Of course, such description makes sense when a "man" is later revealed as a woman. But though the reader is kept guessing, the description becomes grotesque when Ingraham, for example, describes a hero as having

a complexion . . . unmarred by a blemish, and tinted with a delicacy that would have driven a metropolitan belle mad with envy, while his features were effeminate in their beauty . . . With eyes large, black, dreamy to sadness, his velvety skin, beardless face, pearly [sic] teeth and waving masses of red-gold hair, falling below his shoulders, he was one to fascinate both men and women by his really weird beauty.²⁶

Many heroes wear distinctive outfits, and the dress also is often carried to excesses of grotesque eccentricity. To bolster an ordinary chase story Aiken gives his heroes just such eccentricity. Gideon Goldlace is "a perfect Samson" with curly golden hair and dark blue eyes. Physically he is no more than many another hero, but his outfit combines the dress of a Mexican cavalier and a frontiersman. He wears russet boots, green velvet trousers embroidered with gold lace and five-dollar gold pieces, a short Mexican jacket of scarlet velvet with gold lace and buttons of old Spanish coins, a white linen shirt with diamond buttons, a purple silk sash, a leather belt ornamented with silver, and a lace trimmed Mexican sombrero with a stuffed rattlesnake for a hat band.²⁷

²⁶Velvet Face, the Border Bravo . . . , SJ, XII, Nos. 582-593 (May 7-July 23, 1881).

²⁷Gideon Goldlace, the High Horse of the Pacific. A Tale of Western Texas, BeW, I, No. 52-II, No. 62 (November 10, 1883-January 19, 1884).

Though Gideon's clothes were more a mad concoction of colors than those of other western heroes, he wore only the standard arms: two revolvers and a bowie knife. But story-paper authors did not neglect the opportunity to give their heroes exaggerated ability with weapons. Badger's Old Bull's Eye,²⁸ who can hit two Spanish dollars tossed in the air, is but one example of the most common ability--the fastest gun. Oll Coomes, however, made a specialty of creating heroes with singular accomplishments. Even at twenty yards Bowie-Knife Ben can plant his knife in the center of a circle "whose diameter would admit of the width of the blade."²⁹ Whip-King Joe, though he carries both carbine and revolver, makes a habit of disarming villains and decapitating rattlesnakes with a bull whip.³⁰ Witless Seth kills Indians by slinging a one-inch lead ball from an elastic string.³¹ Sure Shot Seth merely throws stones at his victims.³²

Heroes inherit such prodigious abilities from Leatherstocking, their common mythic ancestor, but grotesque physical appearance is

²⁸Old Bull's Eye, the Lightning Shot of the Plains, SJ, V, No. 255-VI, No. 267 (January 30-April 24, 1875).

²⁹Bowie-Knife Ben, the Little Hunter of the Far Nor'-West, SJ, V, Nos. 224-236 (May 27-September 19, 1874).

³⁰Whip-King Joe, the Boy Ranchero; or, The Border Schoolmaster, BeW, II, Nos. 53-59 (November 17-December 29, 1883).

³¹Old Hurricane; or, The Dumb Spy of Des Moines, SJ, IV, Nos. 165-175 (May 10-July 19, 1873).

³²Sure Shot Seth, the Boy Rifleman; or, The Young Patriots of the North, SJ, VII, No. 353-VIII, No. 367 (December 16, 1876-March 24, 1877).

a characteristic of the cheap later western story. Coomes specialized also in introducing a variety of freaks to his tales. Most common are the giants. Old Solitary, Old Hurricane, and Ajax are all fully seven feet tall.³³ But at least one is a giant only through the author's liberality; the hero of Baby Sam, the Boy Giant of the Yellowstone is merely five feet, ten inches tall.³⁴ Coomes did not stop with giants. Witless Seth, a deaf mute, is one of a group of speechless heroes which includes Dumb Hercules, "a dreadful giant," and Silent Saul, a strong and handsome lad with "a horrible red scar" just above his Adam's apple.³⁵ To this group of "original" heroes are added One-Armed Alf and One-Armed Phil, both tall, near giants of men, who can shoot and fight as well with one arm as others can with two.

Men used disguises for much the same reasons as women, though very seldom to disguise their sex. Ordinarily, however, a hero maintained his own identity but had a personal secret mission. Badger's Kit Fox, for example, was a teen-aged collegian who returns

³³Old Solitary, the Hermit Trapper; or, The Dragon of Silver Lake, SJ, III, Nos. 147-153 (January 4-February 15, 1873); Ajax, the Infant Giant; or, Kit Bandy Outwitted, BW, VI, Nos. 266-272 (December 17, 1887-January 28, 1888).

³⁴Baby Sam, the Boy Giant of the Yellowstone; or, Old Spokane Joe's Trust. A Romance of "Wonderland", BeW, I, No. 48-II, No. 54 (October 13-November 24, 1883).

³⁵Hercules, the Dumb Destroyer; or, Dick, the Boy Ranger. A Romance of the Niobrara, BeW, I, Nos. 34-40 (July 7-August 18, 1883); Silent Saul, the Young Mountain Patrol; or, The Protege of Pilgrim's Bar, BW, VI, Nos. 303-308 (September 1-October 6, 1888).

home as a federal "Secret Service Detective" to ferret out the murderers of his father.³⁶ More sensational are the grotesque disguises used to exercise revenge secretly or to provide self-protection under a secret identity. Old Solitary lives in a houseboat fixed up to look like a dragon. By day it is moored in a cave on the lake shore; by night the "dragon" glowing fiercely in the dark wards off hostile Indians who, fearing the evil spirit, keep clear of the lake.

As in the domestic novel, a ghost-like disguise can always be explained rationally. The hero of Aiken's Fire Face, the Mysterious Highwayman has a face "white and ghastly, and apparently as immovable as the face of the dead." Moreover, the bright light with which it shines enables Fire Face even to read a letter in the dark. Sixteen paragraphs from the end of the novel the reader is informed that the face is a wax mask rubbed with phosphorus.³⁷ In Coomes' Death-Notch, the Destroyer a mysterious slayer, believed to be a ghost, marks his Indian victims with a notch on the forehead. But the victims' bodies bear no signs of violence. The "ghost" is revealed as the hero who, by striking his victims a sharp blow at the base of the skull, is avenging the Indians' murder of his parents.³⁸ Still another avenging hero is a night rider who

³⁶Kit Fox, the Border Boy Detective; or, Wilda, the Brand-Burner's Daughter, BeW, II, Nos. 82-87 (June 7-July 12, 1884).

³⁷Fire Face, the Mysterious Highwayman; or, The Silver King's Trap, A Tale of Colorado, BeW, III, Nos. 114-125 (January 17-April 4, 1885).

³⁸Death-Notch, the Destroyer; or, The Spirit Lake Avengers, SJ, III, Nos. 136-147 (October 19, 1872-January 4, 1873).

wears a mask and black clothes painted to make him appear like a living skeleton.³⁹ But the Beadle progenitor of these ghosts is Aiken's Red Arrow, the Wolf Demon, the story of a trapper who avenges his wife's murder by disguising himself in the skin of a giant wolf, clawing and killing any Indian he meets. He mangles eleven Indians before he is himself tracked down and shot by the romantic hero and his friends.⁴⁰

A discussion of heroes, heroines, and villains would not be complete without some mention of the western Indian. By the 1870's the Indian problem was almost a dead issue. The red man was no longer considered an actual menace, and, hence, was already tending to become more an object of curiosity than the hateful obstacle he had been to westward expansion. By 1871, when the Saturday Journal was but a year old, the federal government had already ceased making treaties with Indian tribes and was beginning to establish reservations that would isolate the tribes from growing western settlements.⁴¹ Story-paper Indians, therefore, are little more than ordinary villain figures, who seldom have personalities of their own. As a matter of fact, the red man is seldom even an individual, though some heroes, notably Dick Talbot, have colorful but quiet Indian

³⁹ Aiken, Silver Sam; or, The Mystery of Deadwood City, SJ, VII, No. 362-VIII, No. 379 (February 17-June 16, 1877).

⁴⁰ Red Arrow, the Wolf Demon; or, The Queen of the Kanawha, SJ, I, Nos. 35-49 (November 12, 1870-February 18, 1871). Repeated in SJ, IV, Nos. 190-205 (November 1, 1873-February 14, 1874).

⁴¹ Roy Harvey Pearce discusses the Indian situation of the 1870's in The Savages of America (Baltimore, 1953), pp. 239-244.

companions to scout for them, save them from hostile tribes, and provide occasions for laconic dialogues laced with "Ugh." As a mob character, however, the Indian plays a villain's role in any cavalry or Buffalo Bill tale.

In the latter half of the Beadle story paper run, however, some articles and stories treat the Indian sympathetically. For after the Custer massacre the Indians were permanently suppressed, and later they were exploited in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

Whittaker's Sitting Bull, the Red Monarch, fictionalizing events following the Battle of Little Big Horn, relates the hardships of the Sioux retreat into Canada. As for Sitting Bull, he could have begun a new war, for many stood by him; but he "never murmured in his captivity, behaving so well that he was finally released."

Then the story turns to history. Sitting Bull escorted by Buffalo Bill is sent East "to see the wonders of the white man." After viewing for himself both the white man's civilization and the vast numbers that could join in a war against him, "the greatest Indian in intellectual capacity that ever guided a war" turned "the force of his intellect to the problem of how to make of his people men who will live like the whites, and have no more unequal wars."

Whittaker's Sitting Bull had but one wish: "to live at peace."

But story-paper sympathy had turned enough toward the Indian that Whittaker could admit that Sitting Bull's attainment of his wish

depended "on the way he is treated by the white man."⁴² After Sitting Bull had made his Eastern fame by appearing with Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, the Banner Weekly was even sympathetic enough to quote "an army officer" who commented that the red chief refused to talk of the Custer massacre because it was part of an unfortunate past. "If Sitting Bull had been a white man," the Officer continued, "he would have been called a great general . . . he was a great natural soldier--a sort of red Napoleon."⁴³

By 1887, moreover, the Banner Weekly even sympathized with the Indian enough to compare him favorably, though jokingly, with the white man. A column filler relates the incident of an "Ore merchant" who is gratified that the debts of dead Indians are paid by their relatives. The merchant is always sure, he says, of getting any money due him if an Indian dies; whereas "when a white man dies leaving no property, no matter how rich his relatives are, I never expect to get a cent."⁴⁴ The editorial comment has its ironic bite: such a practice by the Indians proves "that the Indians of the Far West have not yet been civilized . . ."⁴⁴

The story papers introduced, also, a number of Indian maidens, often as secondary heroines. Usually the pretty Indian girl

⁴²Sitting Bull, the Red Monarch; or, The Half-Breed's Plot. A Story of the Great Manitoba League, BeW, III, Nos. 145-156 (August 22-November 7, 1885). Repeated in BW, XI, Nos. 538-550 (March 4-May 27, 1893).

⁴³BW, XIV, No. 689 (January 25, 1896), 6.

⁴⁴BW, V, No. 257 (October 15, 1887), 2.

functions as the informant for the heroic white man or, when white heroes and heroines are in captivity, she furtively cuts their bonds and leads them to safety. As a romantic heroine, however, she is usually doomed to frustration, for Indian blood is an impediment to marriage with a white man. There is hope for an Indian girl only if she is light-skinned and eventually identified as a long-lost daughter of white parents. This is not to say that an Indian girl never marries outside her race, though she is hardly eligible to marry a respectable American. The beautiful daughter of an Indian chief in Velvet Face, the Border Bravo marries the Chinese cook in the story--the same Chinese who is permitted to swear in print. And in The Red Mazeppa Silver Spear, a "white" Indian marries a reformed Mexican bandit. But the marriage is respectable only because she is discovered to be half Mexican, a Christian, and an heiress to her white father's estate.

I. Western Comic Heroes

Probably the most noticeable difference between the western hero of action and the western romantic hero is that the former never marries the heroine. The hero of action is every bit as strong, clever, and daring--according to story-paper fashions--as his romantic counterpart, but in addition he is more truly a son of the West. For one thing, the hero of action without a romantic role to play can be of any age or of any appearance. Often he is

in his middle fifties; moreover, he is exempt from requirements of good looks and proper background. He is, in short, a true descendant of Leatherstocking: always dialectal in his speech; wise in the ways of the wilderness; on the spot for a rescue or a fight; familiar with the habits of Indians and known and respected by them; always the best tracker, the best shot, and the strongest fighter despite any apparent frailty of age.

The earliest of the Leatherstocking imitations is old Nick Whiffles, created by John Hovey Robinson, one of the first writers of story-paper westerns. Robinson had been contributing to the Flag of Our Union from the forties, and in 1857 was signed to an exclusive contract by the Weekly. The first Nick Whiffles serial began in the Weekly of June 5, 1858. Later, others appeared in the New York Mercury. Beadle and Adams acquired rights to some Mercury stories and in the seventies issued them as dime novels.⁴⁵ Even after Robinson's death in 1867 Beadle and Adams resurrected Old Nick Whiffles in two serials which appeared in the Saturday Journal. The author of the tales, known as James Fenimore Cooper Adams or Bruin Adams, was Edward Ellis, whose own dime novel Seth Jones was still a best seller years after its publication in 1860.⁴⁶

Old Nick is basically a comic character--teller of tall tales, eccentric dresser, elderly backwoods philosopher--accompanied in his adventures by Shagbark, his horse, and Calamity, his dog; with

⁴⁵Johannsen, II, 241-243.

⁴⁶Ibid., II, 6.

Nick they make a mighty triumvirate. Like Leatherstocking before him, Nick is a garrulous story-teller, almost constantly prating about one or another of his many "diffikilties." But in emergencies he always demonstrates his pre-eminence as a frontiersman.⁴⁷ The Nick Whiffles type, as a hero of action and an analogue of Leatherstocking, became a stock character throughout the run of Beadle story papers. Old Coomes especially made a practice of introducing the figure to his tales. Some individual Whiffles figures appear in only one tale. Old Wolverine in Coomes' The Giant Rifleman has Nick Whiffles' physical characteristics and is accompanied by two faithful dogs, Mellow Tongue and Fleetfoot.⁴⁸ Less obviously a Whiffles figure is Old Mortality, an odd old man dressed in buckskin "half-civilized and half-savage in style," with a large mouth and short stubby whiskers.⁴⁹

Coomes first exploited the Nick Whiffles type in three tales starring Old Dan Rackback, published in the Saturday Journal between 1874 and 1876. Dan appears first as an itinerant preacher accompanied by his faithful animals. The introduction of the animals in Dakota Dan, the Reckless Ranger initiates an oft-repeated pattern of

⁴⁷The two Whiffles tales published in SJ are: The Phantom Princess; or, Ned Hazel, the Boy Trapper, SJ, I, Nos. 46-52 (January 28-March 11, 1871); The Blackfoot Queen; or, Old Nick Whiffles in the Valley of Death. A Sequel to "The Phantom Princess," SJ, I, Nos. 52-58 (March 11-April 22, 1871).

⁴⁸The Giant Rifleman; or, Wild Life in the Lumber Region, SJ, VIII, Nos. 375-388 (May 19-August 18, 1877).

⁴⁹Little Texas, the Young Mustanger. A Tale of the Texan Prairies, SJ, X, Nos. 494-503 (August 30-November 1, 1879).

reference: "Thar is Patience, my hoss here, and Humility, my dorg thar . . .'" Moreover, though Dan Rackback was the human personality, he insists that the three--man, horse, and dog--acting together be known as "Dakota Dan, the Great Triangle." In appearance, Old Dan is true to the Whiffles type. He wears an old coonskin cap with the brim of an old felt hat. His oversized coat is of black broadcloth. His buckskin pants are too small. He wears one moccasin and one high-topped boot. Physically he is a

little wiry-looking man of perhaps five and fifty years, with a thin long face, a sharp hooked nose, and small, steel-gray eyes. His mouth was of unusual size and encircled with a short, bristling gray beard. His whole face was comical in its outlines, yet wore an expression of childish simplicity. His eyes were the most remarkable feature of the man. They were possessed of a strange mobility--now glittering with the keenness of a hawk's, now glowing with the fierceness of the tiger's, now beaming with the softness of a maiden's--always relaxing into that dull, vacant stare of one devoid of reason.⁵⁰

The advantage of such a comic appearance is obvious to any reader, though not, of course, to the characters in the tale. Here is a man never to be taken seriously as a menace to any villainous activity going on right under his long nose. And the horse and dog look just as old and lifeless as their master. But Dan and company can rise to any need. From South Dakota to New Mexico they are involved in foiling abduction plots, uniting lovers, reuniting parents and children, and rescuing captives from Indian camps. The

⁵⁰ Dakota Dan, the Reckless Ranger; or, The Bee-Hunter's Excursion, SJ, V, Nos. 240-247 (October 17-December 5, 1874).

triangle has vitality never indicated by its appearance. Dan's bony, swaybacked mare has the speed of wind; his decrepit hound the strength and cunning of a commando dog. When Dan must outrun the ponies of the pursuing Indian braves, Patience is equal to the task. When Dan is wounded in an Indian fight, Humility faithfully drags him out of sight and guards him until he recovers.

An amazing expert with a rifle, Dan can save any heroine from the clutches of an Indian captor. But he cannot resist prefacing the crucial shot with unlikely verbosity, always colorful and florid in a western colloquial sense. Had Old Coomes enjoyed half the reputation of Cooper, perhaps Mark Twain would have taken him to task for Dan's loquaciousness in times of crises. In Old Dan Rackback, the Great Extarminator, for example, Dan saves a heroine from an Indian who is carrying her off. Before shooting the escaping abductor, Dan explains to the girl's father,

"I'm an old subject of anatomy, what takes to shootin' Ingins just as nateral as water runs down hill; and, stranger, seein' that gal, be she your darter or not, is in an excroosheatin' deefickilty, s'pose you allow me to administer to that red-skin. I can see the blaze of the devil's eye just above her shoulder, and I think I can spile that optic if any man this side of creation can."

Of course, he succeeds better than "any man this side of creation" can.

But Dan is a soft-hearted Indian killer. Consistent with story-paper morality about cold-blooded killing and popular attitudes about the savage red man, Dan moralizes about the ethics of killing

any human being at all. After accomplishing the rescue, Dan soothes the heroine:

"There, there," mused the scout, in a half contrite tone, "it's over with again, and the Lord only knows how many times it makes in the history of the Triangle. We have no desire to know how many we have slain; we are sorry that we've had to slain [sic] any at all. But death is all that'll tame the red-skin--yes, all that'll bring 'em anyways near civilized life."⁵¹

Strong and clever as he is, Old Dan Rackback is, nevertheless, hardly invulnerable. In each of the three tales he is wounded at least once. But in Old Dan Rackback, the Great Extarminator the injury is mortal. The final installment includes three sentimental chapters about Dan's dying hours, during which he admonishes his friends and experiences a vision of paradise. "'I know I have been a rough old codger,'" gasps the dying Dan, "'but then I acted in the sphere in which God placed me, and feel in my heart that I will be admitted to the presence of the great Fathers.'"

A cohort of Old Dan Rackback during his last adventures is Old Kit Bandy, a reformed outlaw turned ranger detective. After Dan Rackback's death, Bandy becomes the hero of action in fifteen tales by Coomes.⁵² Old Kit is much more flamboyant than his fictional predecessor. His friend Tom Rattler describes him as "Mountain

⁵¹Old Dan Rackback, the Great Extarminator; or, The Triangle's Last Trail, SJ, VII, Nos. 324-339 (May 27-September 9, 1876).

⁵²See Appendix B, infra, for a list of Kit Bandy tales appearing in the Beadle story papers.

detective, prize fraud and diplomaed liar."⁵³ This is to say that Kit is an inveterate teller of tall tales and a master of disguise as well; he thus represents the deterioration of the Nick Whiffles figure into a mere story-paper functional type who provides "gimmicks" of artificial originality and suspense. He can so change his appearance and voice that he can become a candidate for Congress, an Indian chief, or an English tourist who, though he exaggerates his aspirates, comically lapses occasionally into loose frontier grammar. Whenever Bandy reveals his true self, the throwing off of the disguise is accompanied by habitual biblical expletives such as "'Hands up, Socarro, or, by the horn o' Joshua! whang she goes! I'm Kit Bandy, the Mountain Detective!'"

No animals provide Kit with companionship. He has, instead, two comic human cohorts, Tom Rattler and Ichabod Flea. Ichabod is known as "the champion fraud of the North West," and as such is Kit's legitimate competitor in the art of disguise. During the entire series of Bandy tales Ichabod's favorite disguise is the garb of a woman. Whenever Kit Bandy is captured by villains or Indians, Ichabod's disguise creates a Mrs. Bandy searching for her deserting, faithless husband. "'I am Sabina Bandy," the pseudo-female cries, "'the legally wedded and wrongfully deserted wife of Old Kit Bandy! That's who I be, please the Merciful Master!'" The device always provides Ichabod sufficient opportunity for comic dialogue and farcical action, but at the same time the stock

⁵³ Kit Bandy in Red Ruin . . ., BW, VII, Nos. 329-335 (March 2-April 13, 1889).

situation becomes a means of extracting Old Kit from captivity or from danger of death. For Sabina's pleading always wrings pity from the captors, and they are so taken by the gross injustice done her that Kit is released to her to suffer the punishment she deems fit.

Poor Nick Whiffles, that your Leatherstocking legacy as woodsman, trapper, and hero of action should pass to descendants whose comic antics serve merely to splice episodes of rescue, Indian battles, abductions, and reunions.

II. The He-Man

But heroes of a series of stories were not all comic. Dick Talbot, hero of sixteen tales by Albert Aiken published between 1871 and 1889,⁵⁴ possessed a depth of personality lacking in the conventional ranger, trapper, or hunter with the alliterative sobriquet. Talbot was both romantic hero and hero of action. He was both outlaw and upholder of law. As a suitor he was both victorious and defeated. Like Deadwood Dick, his later "Dime Library" counterpart who never appeared in the Beadle weekly papers, Talbot was a male fashionplate with whom women naturally fell in love.⁵⁵ Talbot married five wives and enchanted eleven other women. Like

⁵⁴ See Appendix C, *infra*, for a list of Dick Talbot tales appearing in the Beadle story papers.

⁵⁵ For the basis of this comparison between Deadwood Dick and Talbot, see Smith, *Virgin Land*, pp. 95-102.

Deadwood Dick, Talbot at times reverts to lawlessness. But unlike Deadwood Dick, a poor lowborn westerner, Talbot is a wellborn Easterner with the dark background of a fugitive from justice. His is the kind of past and present that haunts Oakhurst in Bret Harte's "Outcasts of Poker Flat" (1869); both men are tormented and hunted even in the wild West.

From the first installment of the first tale the reader is well aware that Talbot is an alien in the West. Like a true western hero Talbot is

quick as lightning on the trigger, spry as a cat with a bowie-knife; the best two-handed sparrer that ever set foot in the Reese river valley, and the finest poker-player that ever handled a deck of cards . . .

But his arms and hands are "white and fair as those of a beautiful woman." Furthermore, the rougher men of the town know him as "Gentleman Dick" because "he wore 'store clothes,' a white shirt, always clean--he was the only man in Spur City that could boast of such a luxury--polished boots and kid gloves." Indeed when the beautiful heroine of Overland Kit first sees Talbot, she is convinced that he is her lost cousin who fled the East to escape prosecution.⁵⁶ Thirteen years after writing the first tale of the series, Aiken has his hero admit ambiguously that he had fled

⁵⁶SJ, II, Nos. 68-82 (July 1-October 10, 1871). Because the Dick Talbot tales are listed in Appendix C, references to individual tales in this section are in abbreviated form.

New York "like a thief in the night, and all for a rash blow struck in the hot impetuosity of youth."⁵⁷

In the first Talbot story, the hero lives a double life as road agent and as gambler. Both identities lead him into trouble. As an outlaw, he has a price on his head; as a gambler he is told, like Oakhurst, to leave town or die as a "gambler, cheat, and bully." Talbot reforms with good intentions. In subsequent tales he goes into the mining business, becoming manager and later owner of a mine. But bad luck dogs him wherever he goes. His past as an outlaw makes him a suspect character; his irascible temperament leads him into punishing his enemies by taking the law into his own hands.

Needless to say, there is little inherent humor in the Dick Talbot stories. Unlike Nick Whiffles figures who provide their own brand of humor, Talbot himself is involved in no comical adventure. Humorous by-play in these tales comes from Talbot's colorful western friends who furnish columns of racy dialogue unrelated to the story. More integral to the novels themselves, however, is the humor that results from farcical vigilante trials wherein Talbot invariably is the defendant. These trials provide an ironic comedy that serves only to make Talbot's position more pathetic. He is constantly the victim of mob action, illegal procedure, trumped up testimony, and fraudulent judges.

⁵⁷Dick Talbot in New York . . . , BeW, II, Nos. 92-103 (August 16-November 1, 1884).

Little wonder then that of all western heroes Talbot is most justified in drinking. He has much to forget, and drink helps him forget his past and his current troubles. "'It's strange,'" he murmurs in Overland Kit as he downs straight shots,

"at any other time I couldn't bear the taste of a drop of this, but now, I can drain it off like water. It's bad enough, too, to burn a hole through a man's throat. If it will only make me sleep and forget, that's all I ask of it."

Such a story paper hero, one would think, needs only a good, beautiful heroine to marry and settle down with. He does marry, over and over again. But his own black fate, he believes, prevents him from attaining happiness. Two wives die from illness, two others are shot--one accidentally, the other wantonly--by Talbot's enemies. These events only make him more ferocious in exacting his revenge. To avenge the death of one wife, Talbot even joins a tribe of warring Indians and helps kill his white antagonists.⁵⁸ His fate leads also to the death of women who love him unrequitedly. Time and again he decides to be a woman hater--for their sake, not his own. At the end of Gold Dan, for example, Talbot laments,

"All that love me are doomed to die! . . . No rest! no peaceful home for me! No children to play around my knee and smooth my path in old age. Oh fate! if you have nothing better for me in the future . . . let me not live, but die and find the rest that is denied me here, in the earth from whence I came."⁵⁹

⁵⁸Kentuck, the Sport . . . , SJ, V, Nos. 211-227 (March 28-July 18, 1874).

⁵⁹SJ, VIII, Nos. 400-411 (November 10, 1877-January 26, 1878).

But Talbot carries on in spite of grief or bereavement. He is always a mighty and victorious fighter. And if he has bad luck in love, he has good luck in war, even against the usual odds. Ability alone cannot help Talbot in Gold Dan, for example, when he is ambushed by a Mormon chief, his enemy. The Mormon fires seven shots at the unsuspecting Talbot. The first grazes his head and stuns him. Only two of the other six hit the apparently dead man, "just breaking the skin and drawing the blood, but nothing more." In a more conspicuous episode, Talbot takes on four opponents at the same time. Each of the four shoots once; two bullets miss, and the others graze Talbot's cheek and wound his arm. Four times as fast with a gun, Talbot fires four times, killing two men, fatally wounding a third, and incapacitating the fourth.⁶⁰

If at the close of Injun Dick Aiken had allowed his hero to die and remain dead, perhaps Talbot would have been a more memorable story-paper hero. At the time of Injun Dick, Talbot, who has already lost two wives, is once again deeply in love. He is now involved in a losing battle for the Cinnabar mine, though he is fighting valiantly to put off his defeat. Ironically, as a final twist of fate, he is shot not by his enemies but by a gang of drunken miners acting irrationally. Tended by Mud Turtle, his faithful Indian follower, Talbot murmurs his last words.

"I don't complain--blood will have blood; maybe it is better for this girl that she is spared from me; I might only drag her down to death like all the

⁶⁰Richard Talbot of Cinnabar . . . , SJ, XI, Nos. 530-544
(May 8-August 14, 1880).

rest that have loved me. My love is fatal to woman . . . When I am dead, carry me to the top of Mount Shasta. At midnight kindle a fire, and in it place my body; ashes to ashes, and dust to dust. There, to the flames I gave my dark-eyed Yuet-a! Oh! how many noble women have died for me!"⁶¹

The funeral pyre burns brightly, and the Talbot series closes--for a while. Apparently, however, the hero was too good copy to come to such an early end. Aiken found it easy to resurrect him simply by opening his next tale with an episode in which Mud Turtle discovers, just before he consigns the body to the flames, that "life was not yet extinct!"⁶² Thus began a new trail of broken hearts, dead wives, and vicious revenge. As with the Nick Whiffles type, the effectiveness of Dick Talbot as a hero was weakened by repetition in the later stories. Over and over Talbot loved and lost, fought and won. Finally Aiken himself must have tired of Talbot, for the author merely led his hero to quiet retirement. Talbot's fifth wife, healthy and out of harm's way, is discovered to be an heiress. The happy couple then settle down to "peace and rest."⁶³

Reader interest in Talbot's experiences is indicated by the kind of commentary that found its way to the editorial pages of the Saturday Journal. A letter from Albert Aiken dated May 10, 1877, states

⁶¹Injun Dick . . . , SJ, V, No. 245-VI, No. 264 (November 21, 1874-April 3, 1875).

⁶²The Velvet Hand . . . , SJ, VIII, Nos. 380-393 (June 23-September 22, 1877).

⁶³Talbot in Arms . . . , BW, VII, Nos. 321-333 (January 5-March 30, 1889).

that though many readers might suppose Talbot is "but a creature of fiction, a coinage of my own," he is remembered by "any of the old inhabitants of the mining regions." Aiken claims, moreover, that Talbot's funeral is "the first attempt at cremation . . . on record, in this land of the Occident."⁶⁴ Later in answer to the question of a reader "W.P.H."--possibly fictitious--the editors answer that Dick Talbot is a fictional character, "but many things in the several stories are 'actual occurrences.'"⁶⁵ Again Aiken replies in a letter dated November 2, 1880.

Talbot is no figure of the imagination, but lived and had a being. From an esteemed lady friend, all of whose girlhood was spent on the Pacific Slope, I first learned of Richard Talbot. He protected her mother in a mining camp, and, of course, in her eyes was a man above all men. Old residents on the upper coast will probably remember the bloody encounter at Walla Walla between Talbot and a party of drunken soldiers, when he interfered to protect the once favorite California actress, Sue Robinson, from insult.

Believe me, my dear Journal, Talbot is no fiction, and wild as are the tales I have told of him, the reality transcends them all.⁶⁶

III. Buffalo Bill and His Pard

Readers of the Beadle story papers had no difficulty deciding whether William Frederick Cody was real or fictional. Buffalo Bill

⁶⁴SJ, VIII, No. 378 (June 9, 1877), 4.

⁶⁵SJ, XI, No. 556 (November 6, 1880), 4.

⁶⁶SJ, XI, No. 559 (November 27, 1880), 4.

was real--the most daring, the most courageous, the most adventurous scout to ride the plains. And he was a hero of popular fiction long before tales about him and by him ever graced the pages of Beadle story papers, for Ned Buntline had immortalized him with his own tales that appeared in the New York Weekly.⁶⁷

But discussing Buffalo Bill as a hero of western fiction involves difficulty not raised by the obscure reality of a Dick Talbot. Buffalo Bill Cody was hardly an obscure figure. In addition to being given heroic proportions by Buntline, he was a clever enough showman to capitalize upon his fame and add to the wealth of legend that had grown around his name. Perhaps there never will be a "definitive" biography of Cody; facts are too deeply buried, too heavily embroidered to afford anyone a fair opportunity to say what he did or what he did not do. All we can do today, it seems, is compare accounts by Cody, his friends, and his enemies. There are those, for example, who claim Cody never killed a single Indian.⁶⁸ Others give him credit for feats he could not possibly have accomplished because he was not even in the vicinity of the action when it occurred.

⁶⁷For a succinct discussion of the literary history of Buffalo Bill before his appearance in the Beadle papers, see Smith, op. cit., pp. 102-111, and Reynolds, The Fiction Factory, pp. 41-48.

⁶⁸Herbert Cody Blake, The Truth about Buffalo Bill . . . (Brooklyn, 1929); Donald H. Clark, The Autobiography of Frank Tarbeaux . . . (New York, 1930). These two scarce items are cited by Ramon F. Adams, Six-Guns & Saddle Leather (Norman, Okla., 1954), pp. 53, 88.

It is not my intention in this section to resift the stories once again. I am concerned with Buffalo Bill as a hero of Beadle tales. We must, however, attend to some facts, at least; for Ingraham usually and Cody occasionally represented the tales as true accounts of real events. "The Foundation of Fiction is Reality," blares the boldface superscription to an Ingraham tale in which General Custer and Buffalo Bill save a beautiful heroine from the clutches of an outlaw chief and for good measure round up the gang he leads.⁶⁹

In his biography of Cody, Richard J. Walsh cites nine major events upon which Cody's fame is built. Three of these are doubtful or exaggerated. There is no proof that Cody killed his first Indian at the age of twelve; his service in the Civil War was "brief and uneventful"; there is no proof that he and not someone else killed chief Tall Bull at the Battle of Summit Springs. Qualified and cut to size, his other claims to fame are indeed valid. There is little doubt that Cody rode for the Pony Express (though his service might not have been as sensational as legend would have it); there is no doubt about his record as a reliable buffalo hunter under contract to the railroad; there is no doubt that he displayed amazing endurance in carrying dispatches for General Sheridan, that he was an expert guide, and that he participated with the Union cavalry in "several small engagements."⁷⁰

⁶⁹Custer's Shadow . . . , BW, V, Nos. 247-259 (August 6-October 29, 1887).

⁷⁰The Making of Buffalo Bill: A Study in Heroics (Indianapolis, 1928), pp. 202-205.

Beadle and Adams' readers, however, had no scholarly biographical studies to turn to; probably they would not have read such works even if they were available. What they had were a much reprinted biography by Buntline (1869), an "autobiography" (1879) quite possibly the work of Ingraham, and hundreds of tales by Buntline, Ingraham, John Burke, Leon Lewis and others. Upon such stuff was Cody's popular fame built. Myths built upon such foundations die hard, if ever.

Cody's duel with the Sioux chief Yellowhand, which occurred after the Custer massacre, is a crucial event in the legend, and as such it is well considered here. According to Ingraham's Buffalo Bill's Grip the action of the event is predetermined by a vow Cody makes to Custer, "General, if you ever die in battle, I will avenge you." On the battlefield at Little Big Horn immediately after the massacre, Buffalo Bill, surrounded by the bodies of the dead, renews the vow and holds himself "oath-bound to Custer." When Cody and the cavalry force on their retaliatory expedition sight the Indian war party, chief Yellowhand challenges Cody to single combat. The first encounter is with revolvers. Yellowhand's bullet grazes Cody's leg, but Yellowhand himself is "hard hit." There follows hand-to-hand combat with knives, during which Cody buries his knife "to the very hilt in his [Yellowhand's] heart." The victor then takes the scalp of the dead chief and the war bonnet attached to it. He proceeds to kill and scalp Yellowhand's two companions who had stood by during the duel. During the subsequent battle between the remaining forces, Cody slips away, assumes the

disguise of an Indian, and for the rest of the tale spends his time scalping some three hundred Indians. At the end of the story Cody has enough scalps to fashion a rope by which to hang the renegade villain of the tale.⁷¹

So much for the fiction, in which one can expect that facts will be altered or embroidered. But even supposedly factual accounts agree very little. First of all, Cody probably never had the opportunity to swear revenge amid the bodies of the dead. He was on his way from Chicago to Cheyenne when the massacre occurred, and arrived only after it was long over.⁷² In his probably fictionalized autobiography Cody states that when he and Yellowhand were thirty yards apart, he shot the Indian's horse from under him. Then Cody himself was thrown when his horse stepped into a gopher hole. On his feet again, Cody jumped Yellowhand, stabbed him, and scalped him.⁷³ Sell and Weybright's recent biography reprints the complete account of the duel as it appeared in the New York Herald for Sunday, July 28, 1876. The article credits the death blow to a bullet and mentions neither a knife nor a scalping. The biographers themselves state that Buffalo Bill, having shot Yellowhand, scalped him only in anger when he saw that the Indian wore an American flag as a breechcloth and that attached to his own hair was the scalp of a blond

⁷¹Buffalo Bill's Grip; or, Oath-Bound to Custer, BeW, I, Nos. 9-17 (January 13-March 10, 1883).

⁷²Walsh, op. cit., pp. 188-189.

⁷³(Hartford, 1879), pp. 343-344.

woman.⁷⁴ Cody's sister, Helen Wetmore, in her biography also makes no mention of a knife or scalp, but says only that Cody secured the Indian's "topknot and war-bonnet."⁷⁵ Cody himself claimed that the death blow was given with a bowie knife, but perhaps the most legend-shattering account of the whole event is that of a sergeant who claims his own bullet, fired at the same time as Cody's, was the one that killed Yellowhand.⁷⁶

Ingraham made it clear that Cody was not in the habit of scalping his enemies. Such bloodthirstiness was hardly consistent with a hero who spoke such perfect, genteel English, who never smoked or drank, whose manners were so perfect. A footnote to the Ingraham version of the Yellowhand episode justifies Cody because he knew "how highly the Indians prize their scalp-lock, and embittered by the Custer massacre, he determined to take scalps upon his trail of revenge."

Indeed, Cody was the gentlest of heroes. He "never fires wantonly at a human being, be it a redskin or a man ever so wicked."⁷⁷ Such rage as he displayed in the Yellowhand tale, was, in fact, most unusual for the calm hero of other tales. Proud of his fancy

⁷⁴Henry Blackman Sell and Victor Weybright, Buffalo Bill and the Wild West (New York, 1955), pp. 118-124.

⁷⁵Helen Cody Wetmore and Zane Grey, Last of the Great Scouts (New York, 1918), pp. 233-234.

⁷⁶Walsh, op. cit., pp. 192-193.

⁷⁷Ingraham, Buffalo Bill's Grim Guard; or, The Chinaman in Buckskin, BW, XIV, Nos. 677-690 (November 2, 1895-February 1, 1896).

shooting, the fictional Cody relied more upon his name and his cleverness than his ability to shoot a man through the heart at a hundred yards. His gentle character was even displayed on the Beadle's Weekly editorial page when the paper reprinted a letter which accompanied the gold-mounted Winchester Cody sent to Robbie, David Adams' son. The rifle was "the same style I myself use in what the public are pleased to call my 'fancy shooting.'" Cody's admonition to the publisher's son was probably aimed at forming the good judgment of all boy readers of Beadle's papers. The Winchester, said Cody,

. . .has never killed a road-agent or red-skin; nor has it brought down a buffalo, elk or other game, for I had it made expressly for my little Boy Pard; and I trust that while you may never have to use it against a human foe, you may become a champion shot and a hunter sans reproche, when you get to be a big man.⁷⁸

Cody's handsome appearance matched that of any purely fictitious hero. Whether Cody always matched the descriptions of his popularizers, or whether his vanity prompted him to copy the model they made of him can be disputed. His long hair was his pride and his trade-mark; age and the consequent thinning of his hair led to his wearing a wig in his later days as a showman.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, whether or not he was actually so as a young man, tales of him always include florid descriptions of his shoulder-length hair, mustache, and imperial. Small wonder then that Cody's own heroes

⁷⁸BeW, I, No. 31 (June 16, 1883), 4.

⁷⁹Walsh, op. cit., p. 335.

should emerge as carbon copies of Buffalo Bill himself. The heroes of stories signed by Cody were his own friends, Texas Jack Omohundro, Frank Powell, or Wild Bill Hickok. Descriptions of each dwelt upon the long hair and the luxurious mustache. But the imperial, it seems, Cody (or his ghost writer) reserved to himself.

As for the stories about these historical westerners, they were a collection of conventional episodes. Cody, Powell, Omohundro, or Hickok were no more than the purely fictional collection of Buffalo Bill figures. Invariably Buffalo Bill and his "Pards" were involved in a revenge or rescue mission. Tales about them were usually episodic chases ending happily with the usual reunions between parents and children, and a marriage of the romantic hero to the heroine.

IV. Dream Heroes in a Dream World

But what these heroes, real or fictional, did is not nearly as important as what they meant. Readers who idolize Buffalo Bill will little care if a now forgotten sergeant actually killed Yellow-hand. Nor will they worry if Dick Talbot is not a flesh-and-blood person. They will be impressed, however, by tales of strength, daring, brave deeds, and overall success in a wilderness. For if the heroes were unreal, so too was the fairy-tale land they roamed. How many of the thousands of story-paper readers had actually been west? How many of them knew even what the land looked like? Until Cody's Wild West Show, how many had seen a real live Indian? The

entire West was a world of romantic unreality, a land that individual imaginations constructed for themselves with the aid of the romancer. An age of expansion and conquest required he-men to perform the very deeds that story-paper heroes excelled in. And who was to say, therefore, that this world was not truly depicted in popular fiction? The common reader was not acquainted with the few histories and scholarly studies available. Readers of Cody's wild adventures were quite unaware that their hero was a rough plainsman and no stranger to the liquor jug. Still less did they suspect that in years to come Cody would be a sham showman, a debtor, a husband sued for divorce. Only the future would show how their idol fell short of perfection. By that time the ideal would be invulnerable.

CHAPTER SIX

THE BEADLE DETECTIVE TALE; OR, THE GREAT CHASE

. . . a more terrible man-catcher never
got upon a rascal's track.

- Albert Aiken, The Bat of the
Battery; or, Joe Phenix, King
of Detectives. A Thrilling
Story of New York Life by Day
and Night, Beadle's Weekly, I,
Nos. 13-25 (February 10-May 5,
1883).

In the first chapter of his historical and critical study of the detective story Howard Haycraft states that as long as there were no detectives, there could be no detective stories. Not until the early nineteenth century, therefore, when great metropolises--notably Paris and London--began to experiment with professional crime-detection, were there men who could be called "detectives."¹ According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word "detective" did not appear in print until 1843; indeed, the word did not appear even once in Edgar Allan Poe's three tales about that master of ratiocination, C. Auguste Dupin. Yet these tales are generally acknowledged as the earliest detective stories.

Probably the greatest single early impetus to detective fiction was the appearance in 1829 of Eugene Vidocq's Mémoires, almost sixteen hundred pages of bizarre and probably romanticized adventures. If Vidocq is to be taken at his word, during eighteen years (1809-1827) of police service he was responsible for the apprehension of twenty-thousand criminals. On the other hand, if Vidocq is the "colorful liar" Haycraft suggests he is, then perhaps he, rather than Poe, deserves credit as the founder of detective fiction. Whether the Mémoires are the work of a liar or a superman, they became a source for a whole generation of later writers. Gaboriau,

¹Howard Haycraft, Murder for Pleasure; The Life and Times of the Detective Story (New York, 1941), p. 7.

Hugo, Balzac, Dumas, Dickens, Collins, and Doyle all are indebted to some degree, according to Haycraft, to Vidocq's "autobiography."²

Unwilling to admit tales of "Nick Carter and his confrères" to the "dignity" of detective novels, Haycraft labels as fallow the years between Poe's "The Purloined Letter" (1844) and Anna Katherine Green's The Leavenworth Case (1878).³ But there are one or two points worth considering about Nick Carter and his confrères. First, Haycraft limits his definition of a detective novel to stories primarily about detection and containing a proper detective, amateur or professional.⁴ By this restriction he attempts to rule out "mere mystery or criminology." It could be objected that Haycraft's definition sets up hazy rules of exclusion. But more to the point here is that Nick Carter and his successors fit his essential requirements: they are clearly detectives engaged primarily in tracking and capturing criminals. Haycraft's exclusion of the Nick Carter novels and similar tales is justified, however, as we shall see, on the grounds that in these tales the actual scientific process of detection is minimized or entirely absent.

I. Early Story-Paper Detectives

As they first appeared in story papers, detectives were heroes of action inasmuch as their chief function was to rescue abducted

²Haycraft, op. cit., pp. 29-30.

³Ibid., p. 83.

⁴Ibid., pp. ix-x.

heroines, foil further abductions, and rout villainous criminals from hiding. The earliest such detective was Nick Carter, who appeared in the Weekly first in 1871 and remained a steady-selling property of Street & Smith into the 1920's. Carter was the creation of John C. Coryell. Being in great financial need, the author concocted his detective tales with the aid of his own fervid imagination and "a newspaper training that made swift creation easy." Prolific he surely was. His son relates that Coryell could write six stories at a time, turning out an installment each working day in the week. Further, because the writer kept no records, his son can only estimate that Coryell's tales numbered into the "hundreds." Indeed, Coryell had to produce in volume to profit measurably from Nick Carter: by 1890 he was getting only \$150 for a Nick Carter tale running thirteen installments.⁵ On the other hand, demand for the tales was greater than one mind and one pair of hands could satisfy. By 1890 Nick Carter had become a syndicated product, and among the later authors was Frederick Van Rensselaer Dey, a sometime Beadle author who wrote Nick Carters from 1891 until 1922.⁶

In 1872 publisher George Munro introduced readers of his Fire-side Companion to Old Sleuth. This new detective creation, like Nick Carter, was both "author" and hero of his tales, a by-line

⁵Russell M. Coryell, "The Birth of Nick Carter," The Bookman (New York), LXIX (July 1929), 495-502.

⁶Johannsen, II, 81-83. For brief commentary about other authors of Nick Carter stories, see Reynolds, The Fiction Factory, pp. 77-78.

device which buried the identity of Harlan P. Halsey, Old Sleuth's originator. Unlike the youngish Nick Carter, however, Sleuth was an elderly, unobtrusive, apparently harmless countrified character. As a master of disguise, he could change his appearance almost at will to fool even the cleverest villain. Sleuth became popular almost at once. By the middle seventies the Fireside Companion was running two and even three Old Sleuth tales at once.⁷

Indications of the value each publisher placed on his best selling detective product are found in the legal battles between George and Norman Munro and later between George Munro and Beadle and Adams. Norman Munro attempted to capitalize on Old Sleuth's popularity by using a similar character in his own Family Story Paper. Accordingly Norman printed stories written by and starring Young Sleuth and Young Badger (a pupil of Badger, Old Sleuth's assistant). In 1882 George Munro won the suit he brought against his brother, and Norman was enjoined from publishing any stories that might appear to be written by Old Sleuth, Young Sleuth, Badger, Young Badger, or by the Author of Old Sleuth unless such stories were in fact written by Harlan Halsey.⁸ Old Sleuth continued to be the exclusive property of George Munro, who in 1882 exploited his money-maker further by introducing the "Old Sleuth Library," a series comparable to Beadle and Adams' "Dime Library." Roused once again, George Munro in 1888 petitioned to have Beadle

⁷Noel, Villains Galore, pp. 123-124; 165-166.

⁸Ibid., pp. 166-167.

and Adams restrained from using the word "sleuth" in titles of novels. Beadle and Adams won the first round when judgment was rendered in their favor.⁹ But in 1890 the state Supreme Court, upholding Munro, enjoined Beadle and Adams from using "sleuth" as part of any title of an individual publication or series of publications, as the pseudonym of any author, or as the name of any author.¹⁰

When Norman Munro lost his fight to garner part of Old Sleuth's popularity for himself, he retaliated with a new detective creation that actually became more profitable than his attempts to capitalize on Old Sleuth's name. The Family Story Paper began in 1883 to chronicle the adventures of Old Cap Collier, another combination author-hero. Originally Old Cap was the product of W. I. James, but as the detective's popularity demanded that tales be produced in greater volume, "Old Cap Collier" became the pseudonym for a group of writers.¹¹ Old Cap Collier stories began to be issued in library form in 1883, one year after the Old Sleuth library began.

Old Cap and Old Sleuth are two of a kind; only their names are different. Their stories are more than generously laced with miraculous escapes, impenetrable disguises, and feats of prodigious strength. Edmund Pearson analyzes Old Cap Collier; or, "Piping"

⁹BW, VII, No. 314 (November 17, 1888), 4. Johannsen, I, 66-67, summarizes the suit.

¹⁰BW, VIII, No. 402 (July 26, 1890), 4.

¹¹Noel, op. cit., p. 127.

the New Haven Mystery ("Old Cap Collier Library," 1883) for just such characteristic episodes. Sixteen times Old Cap is threatened by clubs, knives, explosion, poisoning, live burial, and a steel trap chair, but each time he escapes not only alive but unharmed. Pearson's "incomplete list" includes only Cap's most sustained disguises, but of these there are eighteen. Seldom is the apparently old and harmless man without a disguise.¹²

II. Beadle Detectives

During the early days of the Saturday Journal, detectives appeared in tales in a role incidental to their profession. They function, therefore, primarily as heroes, only secondarily as detectives, in stories that Haycraft would call merely mystery novels. One of the earliest Journal mystery-detective tales is Aiken's Orphan Nell, the Orange Girl,¹³ the hero of which is Alex Gordon, a detective's clerk. Gordon had been a respected attorney who, upon his father's death, inherited a sizable estate. He was ruined, however, by "wine and the smiles of false beauties" and in no time had so debauched himself that "one morning I awoke to find myself penniless and friendless--my health broken, my reputation gone." Disgraced and impoverished, Gordon settled for a clerk's job in a detective's office.

¹²Pearson, Dime Novels, pp. 138-190, *passim*.

¹³Orphan Nell, the Orange Girl; or, The Lost Heir of the Livingstones. A Romance of City Life, SJ, I, Nos. 41-51 (December 24, 1870-March 4, 1871). Reprinted in BW, X, Nos. 507-518 (July 30-October 15, 1892).

In the course of his duties Gordon gathers information about a missing heiress, Salome Livingstone, daughter of a deceased millionaire by his first wife, and half-sister of the surviving heirs. Salome is thought to be dead; indeed, Gordon has no proof that she ever lived, let alone that she is yet alive. But succumbing to temptation, he exploits his job as a detective's assistant, represents himself as being in the position to know, and attempts to blackmail Richard Livingstone, the elder heir, for \$50,000 and the hand of his sister. In return for the price, Gordon agrees not to inform the lost daughter of her true identity. Just in case Livingstone calls his bluff, Gordon is ready to present Nell, a ragged seller of oranges, as the missing girl. Gordon is unaware, however, that Livingstone is an unscrupulous villain. Livingstone, afraid of the possibilities, does not call the bluff. Instead he frames the unsuspecting Gordon for forgery, and the would-be blackmailer is sentenced to five years in Sing Sing.

Gordon knows now that his attempted scheme has been fortuitously grounded on truth and also that Livingstone suspects that the missing girl is alive and a constant threat to his wealth. Gordon escapes from the guards escorting him to Sing Sing, disguises himself, and seeks assistance from his detective employer. The willing employer assigns Gordon to a case in the West so that Gordon can leave town but still be gainfully employed.

Soon the story becomes a compound of coincidence, for the man whom Gordon is assigned to chase is the very minister who performed the wedding ceremony for the elder Livingstone and his first wife.

Gordon procures the wedding certificate, speaks to the still-living witnesses of the ceremony, and compares other documents with what he already knows of Nell's past. The rest of the story follows the formula. Nell, coincidentally the real Livingstone, daughter of a legal marriage, is the sole heir; Livingstone and his sister as children of a bigamous marriage are excluded from the estate.

It is evident that making Gordon a detective's assistant is mostly a way of explaining how he can obtain the vital information about the missing heiress that sets the plot in motion. Ingraham's Without a Heart is also typical of yarns in which the hero's being a detective is a convenient plot device. In this tale the hero becomes a "United States detective" in order to have legal authority as he tracks down the villain who deserted his sister.¹⁴

The first professional detective in the Saturday Journal was Chris Crewley, a creation of Anthony P. Morris, who appeared in two mystery tales published during the second year of the Journal's run. Neither title nor subtitle of the stories indicated that they were detective tales. But it is indicative of the later emphasis on the detective story that The Flaming Talisman; or, The Unfilled Vow was reprinted in 1894 as Chris Crewley's Winning Hand; or, The Rascally Valet's Double Game. A Story of Detective Life in Washington.¹⁵ The

¹⁴Without a Heart; or, Walking on the Brink. A Story of Life's Sunshine and Shadow, SJ, VII, Nos. 323-333 (May 20-July 29, 1876).

¹⁵SJ, II, Nos. 90-100 (December 2, 1871-February 10, 1872); BW, XII, Nos. 597-607 (April 21-June 30, 1894).

plot of the novel concerns the identification of a lost heir; it is not a detective story. Christopher Crewley, LL.D. [sic], an eccentric lawyer-detective, appears on the scene by coincidence. When the detective accidentally overhears the greedy schemers plotting, he warns the hero's father. During the rest of the tale Crewley is on hand in the capacity of a good angel, warning hero and heroine of danger and advising them for their own good. He saves the hero's father from drinking poison by advising him to test the drink on the pet dog. In another crisis Crewley, imprisoned in a cellar room, escapes by climbing up the chimney and then, perched atop it, yelling to a passer-by to get the police.

Crewley is, therefore, almost entirely a functional minor character who keeps the plot moving in favor of the hero and heroine. But his personality is embroidered so that he emerges as a comic character, though as idiosyncratic in his way as Poe's Dupin. Crewley always wears a black derby and carries a black umbrella. His speech is clipped and dotted with reiterated inane expressions, such as his favorite phrase, "Yours, forever, much." At one point in The Flaming Talisman, when Crewley bursts in to save the heroine, he wields his umbrella, the only weapon he ever uses:

"Look out!" he cried, as the hag staggered back before the terrific blow. "Dangerous, I am! Christopher Crewley--yours, forever, much! Rascals, both--ha!"

Whiz-z-z-z-! circled the umbrella, quick as lightning-streaks, and the lawyer darted and danced about, as if a glowing coal was in each boot.

As an attempt to create a detective of the "apparently harmless" type, Crewley is an unsuccessful characterization. But his weakness as a fictional detective is due largely to his having so little to do in the tales in which he appears. More successful attempts, mostly by Aiken, appeared in the later days of the Banner Weekly, when the harmless pose was already so well established by other characters in rival papers that Beadle and Adams were offering only belated imitations of the fashion. Joseph Badger's Solomon Sober looks like a country parson. He wears a tall hat, black coat, and trousers that look "home-cut and hand-sewed." He seldom relies on disguise, depending mostly on his own "unprepossessing appearance" to carry him safely through difficult situations. In addition, Old Sobersides, as he is called, is well known and feared by all criminals, who are afraid even to attack the detective lest they lose their lives in the attempt.¹⁶ Among Aiken's other creations is Ephraim Solager, whose countrified demeanor so attracts confidence men that in the odd moments he can spare from his primary task of establishing an orphan as an heir, the detective breaks up several confidence games as well.¹⁷ Also looking like an easy victim for a confidence scheme is yet another Aiken character, John Flowers, known as Old Sunflower, the retired chief of "New York City

¹⁶Old Sobersides, the Old-Style Detective; or, The Brothers of Bullet and Steel, BW, X, Nos. 503-516 (July 2-October 1, 1892).

¹⁷The Countryman Detective; or, The Trail of Lucifer. A Romance of the Snares and Wiles of a Great City, BW, VIII, Nos. 374-386 (January 11-April 5, 1890).

detectives" who has become a gentleman farmer and now spends most of his time in the country. In appearance, however, he is more than just another hayseed. The very sight of him raises laughter, for Flowers' blond hair, sideburns, and chin-whiskers sprout from his head and sunburned face to make him look like a living sunflower.¹⁸

Closely related to elderly, apparently harmless sleuths are detective creations who wear a disguise throughout the tale. Such disguise motifs establish a detective personality, maintain it consistently until the final installment, then at the very end reveal the so-called detective as a character who had appeared briefly or not at all during the course of the novel. The device usually calls for some kind of nationality disguise that gives the author opportunity to introduce dialectal humor and further mislead the reader. Such characters are, moreover, usually not professional detectives, but individuals interested in the particular plot complications, who assume the disguise in order to avoid attention or to protect themselves. Aiken's Chin Chin is a Chinese, the genial factotum of a western settlement. As a detective, however, he can never be mistaken as a forerunner of Charlie Chan; for his baggy pants, loose blouse, broad-brimmed hat, wooden shoes, and queue help maintain a comic nationality character. When he reads a reward poster about a missing society belle, Chin Chin begins to hunt the girl. The culprits never suspect the harmless Chinaman, who acts in character so

¹⁸ Old Sunflower, the Hayseed Detective; or, Between the Lamb and the Wolves. A Story of a Tangled City-Trail, BW, IX, No. 467-X, No. 479 (October 24, 1891-January 16, 1892); Old Sunflower, the Silent Smiter; or, The Terrible Reckoning, BW, X, Nos. 491-503 (April 9-July 2, 1892).

well that he even uses "tickling torture" to force a confession from one of the kidnapers' hirelings. At the very end of the tale Chin Chin reveals he is not Chinese at all. Even more surprising is his revelation that he is the kidnaped girl's cousin, who several years before the events of the novel had been wronged and cast off by his uncle. The uncle and nephew make peace, and the novel ends with marriage in prospect for both hero and heroine.¹⁹ Badger added a creation of his own when he introduced Gustave Lucksinger, a detective who speaks a heavily German-accented brand of English. The accent is assumed to add humor to the tale and to make Gus appear harmless to the villains. Like Chin Chin, German Gus is ultimately revealed as the handsome American who wins the heroine.²⁰

It should be obvious that Chin Chin and Gustave Lucksinger are detectives by accident; that is, they are neither professional sleuths, nor does their "detective" work entail any more real detection than Archibald Chesson's in The Winged Messenger, our suggested archetype of the domestic novel, or Dick Talbot's in Overland Dick. Because these characters happen to be in the right place at the right time, they are able to initiate a series of adventures that result in their recognition as clever investigators. Such tales rely almost completely on coincidence to make a detective-hero of an otherwise ordinary person. Familiar with Morse code, the hero

¹⁹Chin Chin, the Chinese Detective . . ., B&W, III, Nos. 130-142 (May 9-August 1, 1885).

²⁰German Gus, the Go-Lightly Detective; or, The Glew of the Thumbless Hand. The Romance of the Lost Baroness, BW, X, No. 515-XI, No. 527 (September 24-December 17, 1892).

of Badger's The Telegraph Detective, for example, begins to track a gang of train wreckers because he opportunely intercepts one of the gang's messages.²¹

Other such detectives are found in the rags-to-riches stories, wherein the boy-hero's exposure of lawbreakers leads to his own rise in the world. Will Somers, a Charles Morris hero, is a common street boy who begs a job at a wholesale dry goods house. Near the end of a working day, when Somers is taking inventory of a newly arrived shipment of goods, he is accidentally locked in the cellar when the business is closed for the night. During the night the boy witnesses the proprietor's secretary and a gang of helpers enter the cellar through a hidden tunnel and steal some of the more valuable silks. Will stalks the guilty secretary until he has enough evidence to accuse the man openly and cause his arrest. In the course of the story Will also is reunited with his long-lost father and sister.²² In another Morris tale a reporter covering a train wreck saves a mother and child from the debris. Learning that she is fleeing from a wicked husband who wants to gain control of her fortune, the reporter assists the distressed wife to a place of hiding and keeps protective guard over her. The husband, however, who succeeds in tracking his wife and child, steals the baby as a

²¹The Telegraph Detective; or, The Train Wreckers of the Union Pacific, BW, XIII, Nos. 658-671 (June 22-September 21, 1895).

²²The Gamin Detective; or, Wilful Will, the Boy Clerk. A Story of the Centennial City, SJ, VIII, Nos. 365-373 (March 10-May 5, 1877).

hostage. But the watchful reporter follows the villain, recovers the stolen child, and by threatening exposure and arrest forces the wicked husband to flee westward.²³ Similarly another Morris street boy uncovers a band of counterfeitters and reunites the romantic hero with his mother; another, a shoeshine boy, exposes embezzlement at a firm he regularly visits searching for customers.²⁴

The Beadle story papers also exploited the professional detective. The foremost professional to appear in the weeklies is Joe Phenix, a New York police detective created by Albert Aiken.²⁵ The first Phenix tale is a full-length explanation of his strange name. Falsely accused of manslaughter, Gilbert Barlee has spent eighteen years of a life sentence in Sing Sing. Yet all this time he has insistently declared his innocence and sworn that if he were free he could bring the real criminal to justice. The police agree to a plot, release Barlee, and at the same time announce his death in the newspapers. The released convict, now "reborn," becomes a detective named Joe Phenix. After he exonerates himself of the crime and arrests the real killer, Phenix joins the police force.²⁶

²³Fred Flyer, the Young Reporter Detective; or, The Bounding Boy of the Star, BeW, I, Nos. 41-47 (August 25-October 6, 1883).

²⁴Detective Dick; or, The Hero in Rags, SJ, VIII, Nos. 383-393 (July 14-September 22, 1877); Turkey Billy, the Shine-'Em-Up Detective; or, The Gamin Guardian, BW, VIII, Nos. 390-396 (May 3-June 14, 1890).

²⁵Beadle and Adams' most enduring detective was Jesse C. Cowdrick's Broadway Billy, who appeared in thirty-nine numbers of the "Dime Library" but never in the Beadle weeklies. Eleven Joe Phenix tales were published originally in the weekly papers; thirteen others appeared only in the "Dime Library." Because the Joe Phenix tales are listed in Appendix D, infra, citations here are in abbreviated form.

²⁶Joe Phenix, the Police Spy, SJ, IX, Nos. 420-434 (March 30-July 6, 1878).

As a detective he chases his prey with "the perseverance of a bull-dog."²⁷ No man is "more fearless of all danger, more crafty in devices, or more successful in penetrating the plans of, and capturing rascals of all grades, from the highest to the lowest."²⁸ Physically he is "possessed of wonderful physical power, undaunted courage, and a face so mobile that it was capable of the most astonishing changes."²⁹ Aiken avoids describing his hero's features with any explicitness; the most he gives his readers is a general description.

In person he was a man of muscular build, broad-shouldered, and massive-faced, smoothly shaven, and with a sad, careworn look upon his features when in repose, but he has one of those mobile faces so necessary to the successful stage-artist, capable of assuming a dozen different expressions almost in a moment. He was attired in the hight [sic] of fashion and looked more like a man who had dressed himself to pay a ceremonious visit than like one about to plunge into the dangerous mazes of Cherry street.³⁰

The reason for Aiken's reluctance to give the detective a face is obvious. For Phenix is a master of disguise, and part of his power over criminals is that only a few persons--the chief of police, for example--know his true features. Thus Phenix becomes one of the Old Sleuth line of detectives. Indeed, Phenix hardly

²⁷ Joe Phenix, Private Detective . . . , SJ, XI, Nos. 541-553 (July 24-October 16, 1880).

²⁸ The Doctor from Texas . . . , BW, XI, Nos. 541-553 (March 25-June 17, 1893).

²⁹ The Bat of the Battery . . . , BeW, I, Nos. 13-25 (February 10-May 5, 1883).

³⁰ Joe Phenix, the Police Spy, SJ, IX, Nos. 420-434.

moves without donning make-up. A sketchy list of disguises includes: sailor, South American, farmer, Jewish broker, "countryman," fisherman, Brazilian, southern gambler, German valet, and German professor.

Aided by his disguises, Phenix roots out murderers, kidnapers, fraudulent claimants of insurance, and robbers. His dangerous adventures always include several episodes wherein Phenix himself is captured and held prisoner. His escapes are spectacular, just as Old Sleuth's are. When Phenix is left in a New York sewer to drown in the rising tide, he manages to swim into the open just as the water reaches his chin.³¹ In another adventure the villains seal Phenix in an underground vault, tap a water main, and leave the detective to drown in the slowly filling room. Just in the nick of time the pressure breaks the wall contiguous to a sewer, and the rushing water carries Phenix with it to safety.³² Another time the detective is given drugged wine and then is "stabbed to the heart." But he escapes the wine because in "hard times" he was addicted to opium and is, therefore, immune from even a large dose; he escapes the stabbing unharmed because he wears a breast plate.³³

Women, too, did their share of detecting in Beadle tales. Joe Phenix has two female assistants, Kate Scott and Mignon Lawrence. Kate becomes a detective when she leaves her home in the Catskills to track down her sister's seducer in New York. The villain happens to be the Spider Captain, a notorious outlaw leader whom Phenix is

³¹Joe Phenix, the Police Spy, SJ, IX, Nos. 420-434.

³²Joe Phenix, Private Detective . . ., SJ, XI, Nos. 541-553.

³³The Bat of the Battery . . ., BeW, I, Nos. 13-25.

also tracking.³⁴ Mignon is an actress who begs her friend, Phenix, to permit her to assist with a case. When the outlaws he is tracking divide forces, Phenix sends Mignon to follow one of the leaders westward.³⁵ Both Kate and Mignon do their best detecting when they are disguised as boys. But since their various roles in the tales are so contrived, the women must be considered little more than attempts at novelty.

Aiken did, however, create a woman detective who functions as the heroine of the two tales in which she appears.³⁶ La Marmoset (the monkey) is "one of the keenest police spies in Paris." Her features are unknown even to her police superiors; no one dares even guess whether she is young or old. All her clients consult her in a dingy, top-floor room that serves her as home and office. But she never meets a client unless her face is either masked or "bandaged." She is always shabbily dressed, and from her sleeves protrude "ugly, discolored fingers." Her voice is "coarse, harsh and discordant, more like the voice of a gross, brutal man than anything else"; yet that voice at times becomes "as soft and as

³⁴Kate Scott, the Decoy Detective . . . , BeW, II, Nos. 65-76 (February 9-April 26, 1884). Kate appears also in The Man of Three . . . , BW, V, Nos. 232-243 (April 23-July 9, 1887).

³⁵The Fifth Avenue Police Spy . . . , BW, XI, Nos. 553-565 (June 17-September 9, 1893). Mignon reappears in The Serio-Comic Detective . . . , BW, XI, No. 569-XII, 581 (October 7-December 30, 1893).

³⁶La Marmoset, the Detective Queen; or, The Lost Heir of Morel, SJ, XII, No. 614-XIII, No. 627 (December 17, 1881-March 18, 1882); The Double Detective; or, The Midnight Mystery. A Romance of the Southland, of the Mysteries of New Orleans, etc., SJ, XII, No. 625-XIII, No. 638 (March 4-June 3, 1882).

musical as the tones of a prima donna, whose silver notes cost gold crowns." During her adventures she assumes various disguises, but usually appears as a male detective, a pretty, young blond woman, or a "stupid-looking" boy.

The second La Marmoset tale reveals the truth about her. She is actually Tampa Morel, a beautiful, twenty-five-year-old widow who has been cheated of her fortune. As a child in Louisiana she was abducted in a raid by Indians, ransomed by a French planter, and brought to France. There she married and was widowed. In her adventures as a detective she learns that a rich estate in Louisiana is rightfully hers, but that enemies of her family have contrived to steal it. La Marmoset comes to the United States to expose the villainy and claim her due. Unfortunately, by the time she succeeds, most of the estate has been squandered; Tampa is left with more troubles than riches. Aiken apparently tired of his detective creation; for, though The Double Detective ends with a promise that her further adventures would follow shortly, La Marmoset never appeared again.

III. Formula and Novelty

The Beadle detective story is more readily adapted to formula than either the domestic or the western tale. While we must grant that all Beadle novels--domestic, western, or detective--are products of formula, we should also acknowledge that the detective story has the weakest plot structure. For centering attention on

a single person, such as the detective, makes hurried production of serials a comparatively easy task. Heroes of such restricted tales must in every episode either get into new difficulties or extricate themselves from former ones. There is little time for the elaborate subplots that pad domestic, western, or even early mystery tales. And coincidence, a vital force in most story-paper novels, is more noticeable in detective tales, because the stock detective story spends little time explaining or rationalizing the accidental concurrence of events.

The standard detective novel relies on a formula that we might call the Great Chase theme, the motif that appears whenever a detective, knowing whom he is after and why, must nevertheless spend the greater portion of the novel either tracking the villains down or waiting for a chance to expose them red-handed. Many detective tales, indeed, are unabashed, contrived chases. Charles Morris's Detective Frank's Rogue-Chase,³⁷ for example, concerns Frank Melton, a detective's assistant who is given expense money and assigned to trail a suspected counterfeiter. The chase carries Frank from New York to Buffalo and then to Chicago. When the suspect suddenly boards a train to St. Louis, Frank has no choice but to follow even though he has left all his money at his hotel. By bullying the conductor Frank manages to remain on the train, and at St. Louis he follows the suspect to a hotel. Then, feeling secure

³⁷ Detective Frank's Rogue-Chase; or, The Boy Vidocq of New York, BW, XII, Nos. 617-622 (September 8-October 13, 1894).

that the chase has slowed for a while, Frank returns to Chicago to claim his money. After returning to St. Louis and resuming his watch, Frank follows the suspect by river boat to New Orleans, where he is captured by the gang. Escaping his bonds, he takes up the trail once more and, by stealing train rides, chases the gang to Louisville. But there he is captured once again. Attempting to be rid of the tracker forever, the gang leader slashes Frank's wrists and leaves him to die. But at that moment the detective chief, acting on information of his own, arrives from New York and captures the entire band of counterfeiterers.

The looseness of the chase formula is nowhere more obvious than in Jubilee Joe, a tale fifteen chapters long written by various authors. Jesse C. Cowdrick wrote chapters one, ten, and fifteen; Edward Wheeler, two and three; Charles Morris, four and six; William H. Manning, five, nine, and eleven; Frank Dumont, seven and eight; William Eyster, twelve and thirteen; and T. C. Harbaugh, fourteen.³⁸ The tale is very much like Detective Frank's Rogue-Chase, except that Jubilee Joe is a fifteen-year-old street boy who becomes involved in a series of abductions, captures, and impersonations. Jubilee Joe demonstrates just what a convenient formula the chase theme provided authors. The problems of unity and coherence

³⁸ Jubilee Joe, the Chain Lightning Detective; or, The Lamb in the Wolf's Den, BeW, III, Nos. 128-133 (April 25-May 30, 1885). Chapter five is by E. L. St. Vrain; chapters nine and eleven by Mark Wilton. Both names are pseudonyms for Manning, according to Gilbert Patten, "Dime-Novel Days," Saturday Evening Post, CCIII (February 28, 1931), 126.

are minimized in favor of a series of loosely connected episodes which can be supplied by the combined efforts of any number of authors as well as by the work of one.

The most popular devices of novelty, of course, were those of disguise and escape. Writers obviously attempted to furnish their characters with a disguise that had not yet been used in some other tale. Naturally this became more difficult as the number of detective tales multiplied, but the assumption was clearly that readers' memories were short and that variety within the individual tale at hand was quite satisfactory. Nevertheless, the device was carried to extremes. Though it was common, not only in detective tales, for a woman to dress like a man, it was much less common for a man to disguise himself as a woman. Yet in Invisible Ivan³⁹ Ingraham created a detective whose features were naturally womanly. The detective had, therefore, a wide range of possibilities. He appears not only as footman, old man, and priest, but also as an old lady and a ghostly "Goddess of Justice." Escapes also gave writers opportunity for variety. Their watchwords might well have been "the more impossible, the more usable in a tale." Hence, escapes from burning buildings, explosions, sinking ships, and raging sewers became commonplace. Two of the more outlandish escapes we have already mentioned: Joe Phenix's escapes from a stab to the heart and from the water-filled subterranean vault.

³⁹ Invisible Ivan, the Wizard Detective; or, The Secrets of the Cells. A Story of the Mysterious Phases of New York City Life, BW, IV, Nos. 160-172 (December 5, 1885-February 27, 1886).

In much smaller measure writers attempted to add novelty to their tales by actuality and personalities. Aiken's Joe Phenix, Private Detective carries a superscription above its title: "A most unusual, improbable story of life in our modern Babylon, New York, and yet as true as truth itself." Ingraham's Invisible Ivan, according to a footnote to the title of the first installment, uses the real names of "real officers in New York city life" for the fictional policemen in the tale. Unfortunately, the authors of detective tales seem to have been entirely uninterested in demonstrating to their readers real policemen at work. True, today's police because of their use of modern methods like fingerprinting can be more easily adapted to fiction. But at no point in the detective tales studied was an important clue discovered or a crucial capture made by a uniformed policeman. Nor do the detective heroes demonstrate their special intellectual powers by arriving at conclusions by evaluation of clues, intuitive insight, or legal perspicacity. Their activity consists of police "footwork" --physical, often violent, tracking--rather than any intellectual approach to solving a case.

It is on these grounds that Haycraft's criticism of story paper detectives is well founded. For certainly they reflect no progress in the technique of detection since Poe's time. Dupin was still the master, and Sherlock Holmes was yet to come.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BEADLE STORY PAPERS AND THE PUBLIC;

OR, HEROES LIVE FOREVER

Why linger longer? The chase of the Golden Phantom has ended in complete success; true love has been fitly rewarded; the time has come for putting out the lights and ringing down the curtain.

- Joseph Badger, High-Water Mark, the Mountain Sport; or, The Phantom Inheritance, Banner Weekly, VIII, Nos. 389-401 (April 26-July 19, 1890).

These then were the story-paper novels: tales of abduction, forced marriages, stolen wills, forged records, utterly base villains, heroic backwoodsmen, flamboyant westerners, persistent detectives, and struggling apprentices. All of them were the same kind of product: hastily written, loosely constructed, highly episodic. The dialogue was florid and melodramatic; the characters were a mixture of unrealistic stock figures and pseudo-realistic dialect types. Sentences and paragraphs were brief, to afford easiest reading for all. And they were read most avidly. No one has attempted to deny that these tales, whether they appeared as dime novels or story-paper tales, were popular. An early estimate said that in the first five years (1859-1864) Beadle published dime books, there were in circulation over five million copies, more than half of them novels.¹ In the seventies the big story papers alone were distributing well over a million copies a week. Perhaps it is even safe to guess that the general story-paper circulation in that decade and during the early eighties was close to two million. According to legends, everyone, bankers and gamins, read the tales. Johannsen gives new life to an unverified rumor that during the Civil War dime books were shipped to the lines in bales to provide leisure pleasure for the soldiers.² Patten and

¹William Everett, "Beadle's Dime Books," North American Review, XCIX (July 1864), 303.

²Johannsen, I, 43.

William Henry Bishop suggest that the audience was largely composed of young boys.³ On the other hand, Reynolds envisions the audience of the Weekly in the sixties as composed of shopgirls.⁴ The Beadle story papers prided themselves on printing testimonials--possibly fictional and all too unreliable--from mothers, ministers, boys, and girls from all parts of the country, attesting the worth of the Beadle product.⁵ Just as difficult to trace is the proportion of circulation which depended on subscriptions.

The reasons for such unprecedented circulation of an American literary product to a mass and largely native audience can be discussed from two points of view. The final chapter of this dissertation attempts to approach the story papers first as literature, and secondly as an index to the cultural and sociological temper of the American mass audience of the last third of the nineteenth century. For aside from their value as collectors' curiosities, story papers, ephemeral and crowd-pleasing as they were, can be studied properly only as such investigation contributes to further understanding of literary and cultural history.

³Patten, "Dime-Novel Days," Saturday Evening Post, CCIII (February 28, 1931), 6; W. H. Bishop, "Story-Paper Literature," Atlantic Monthly, XLIV (September 1879), 383-384.

⁴Reynolds, The Fiction Factory, pp. 38-40.

⁵Typical testimonials are found in SJ, VII, No. 324 (May 27, 1876), 4, and SJ, IX, No. 438 (August 3, 1878), 4.

I. Story Papers as Literature

A literary movement can be evaluated from two points of view: (1) its relationship to literary tradition, and (2) the intrinsic literary qualities inherent in the products of the movement. The plot ingredients employed by story-paper novelists can hardly be called original. As a matter of fact, the plot conventions of the story-paper tale were already well established in medieval times and had reappeared persistently through the centuries in folk tales and, as a later development, in novels.

In Old French literature, for example, a number of themes were so often used as to become stock.⁶ Among these are: the love pact between an elderly husband and a young wife; a lover's suit for his lady; the lover's undergoing a contest or trial for the lady's hand; the contest by which the lady eliminates lovers; the lover killed by a jealous husband; the husband killed by the wife's lover; the lady in love with a young man, forced to marry an elderly suitor; the abandoning of children to avoid the disgrace of adultery; the change of identity by disguise, followed by revelation; and the travels of a hero in search of adventure.

These were some themes of the contes, lais, and fabliaux of Old French literature, common before 1300. Undergoing some minor alterations, these themes persisted, leaving their mark on literary milestones such as The Canterbury Tales, Don Quixote, the plays of

⁶Urban T. Holmes, A History of Old French Literature from the Origins to 1300 (New York, 1930), pp. 180-192, 200-206.

Shakespeare, Tom Jones, Humphry Clinker, and the novels of Scott and Dickens. This is not to say that the themes did not undergo some quite violent changes as well. The plot built around the adventures of the knight-errant developed into the picaresque mock epic, satiric like Don Quixote or comic like Tom Jones or supposedly autobiographical like Moll Flanders. The theme of the lover's suit developed into idealized accounts like "The Knight's Tale" and personal laments like "The Boke of the Duchess," or novels concentrating upon seduction, like Clarissa and its numerous imitations.

These were hardly the only developments nor the only themes of plot conventions. The point is, however, that by the time story-paper publishers began producing fiction for the masses, they had at their disposal a great variety of sure-fire story lines that could easily be twisted, adjusted, and reshaped into new tales. We have, therefore, in the Beadle novels love triangles, young maidens faced with marriages to elderly and repugnant suitors, young suitors who must prove their worth by trial, villainous lovers bent on seduction, and modern knights-errant now become scouts, back-woodsmen, and detectives, who find adventure in the savage locales of the wild West or the big-city underworld of crime. The story paper was, furthermore, only a segment of a continuing tradition. William Rose Benét analyzed the slick magazines of the 1930's to find that the themes of that time were distinctly similar to those of the very early tales.⁷ He labelled them according to conventions

⁷William Rose Benét, "Among the Slicks," Saturday Review of Literature, XI (February 21, 1935), 501-502.

of folklore: the Goldilocks theme, in which an attractive young lady is pursued by a variety of desirable and undesirable suitors; the Cinderella theme, in which a poor maiden has the good fortune to contract a wealthy marriage; the Jack-the-Giant-Killer theme, a direct development of the conventional theme in which a suitor proves himself by trial; and, the Eat-your-cake-and-have-it-too theme.

This last calls for explanation. It is a direct development of the progressive concentration of popular literature upon class distinctions. In the nineteenth century particularly, because of the large new reading audience available as a result of mass education, fiction increasingly included characters drawn from the middle classes. Such characters came to be placed in plot situations, as in the Cinderella theme, wherein their aspirations conflicted with their station in life. The middle class, for example, traditionally hopes to achieve wealth and all the luxuries associated with it. On the other hand, the wealthy class is traditionally associated with feudal aristocracy, when strict class distinctions led to abuse of the lowly, the flaunting of wealth, and the notorious droit du seigneur. Nevertheless, one of the most persistent axioms of popular literature is, according to characteristics of the best seller as discussed in chapter one of this dissertation, the aspiration of the common people to better their status by achieving wealth and reputation. Because of the traditional taints on the position of wealth, however, the common people have been romantically

portrayed as possessing traits more desirable than riches, namely the domestic virtues of honesty, benevolence, and chastity. We may generalize that as the importance of the middle class in literature grew, the importance of reconciling its idealized domestic virtues with its material ambitions increased so that it became necessary to arrive at a plot device embodying the more proper qualities of both classes. Briefly, the solution lay in permitting middle-class heroes and heroines to rise to wealth without being tarnished by their change in station, in making a lowly maiden an heiress who nevertheless remains innocent and simple, in creating a hero who does not allow riches to overwhelm his bourgeois sentiments or the native integrity traditionally ascribed to his class.

The shift in emphasis to what might be called the democratic way of life leads to consequent alterations in the stock plot characters. Even before dime-novel days the knight-errant and his lady shed their romantic trappings and became unsophisticated apprentices and shop girls. A suggested hypothesis is that the more broadly a magazine attempts to appeal to the masses, the more emphatically it must appeal to the lowly. Thus certain pulp magazines, it is suggested, have a taboo against a hero's going beyond grammar school, the purpose being to make him as appealing as possible to a wide group of readers who can identify themselves with him.⁸

⁸Margaret MacMullen, "Pulps and Confession," Harper's Monthly, CLXXV (June 1937), 94-102.

Conventional plot formulas led to the stereotyping that prompted G. K. Chesterton to make his distinction between fiction as necessity and literature as luxury.⁹ Fulfilling the dreams, or at least embodying the aspirations of a mass public, popular literature, of which story-paper tales are a part, fell into the pattern of repeating constantly the bromides that satisfied the sub-common reader. But formularization led also to the very loss of "every vestige of interest usually sought in works of the imagination," a deficiency that Henry Nash Smith finds characteristic of much popular fiction.¹⁰

If nothing else, formularization encourages speed of composition. Gilbert Patten stated, for example, that Ned Buntline wrote a 610-page book in sixty-two hours, that Ingraham wrote 33,000 words in twenty-four hours, that he himself churned out as much as 50,000 words a week.¹¹ Hurried composition tends naturally to result in inconsistency or in factual errors. William Everett, an early critic of dime novels, belittled them for inconsistent chronology and setting, for a generally poor sense of geography and history,

⁹Chesterton, "A Defense of Penny Dreadfuls," The Defendant, pp. 17-28.

¹⁰Smith, Virgin Land, p. 91.

¹¹Patten, "Dime-Novel Days," Saturday Evening Post, CCIII (March 7, 1931), 57.

and, of course, for gross deficiency in style. Having read a selection of tales, Everett was forced to comment,

Ten of these novels we have faithfully read through, and more up-hill work in the main we never had; and this while Anthony Trollope and Dickens are living, and Thackeray is only just dead.¹²

The deficiencies of dime novels are likewise the weaknesses of story-paper tales, many of which were published serially in a weekly as well as complete in a dime library. William Henry Bishop, writing about story-paper literature in particular, generalized about the same weaknesses in style and consistency.¹³ Johannsen notes that Ingraham's Captain Crimson, the Man of the Iron Face includes the remarkable description of a fallen villain who "lay prone upon his back."¹⁴ Albert Aiken, to offer one more example, foisted some equally impossible geography upon the unsuspecting or ignorant reader by squeezing the region of the Rio Grande del Norte, actually in New Mexico, and the San Juan area of central Colorado into one small space in Colorado.¹⁵ And lest the first lapse be justified as a writer's slip and the second as his license, let us recall also that Beadle and Adams claimed their writers were experts who knew first hand the materials and locales of their tales.

¹² Everett, op. cit., p. 306.

¹³ Bishop, op. cit., pp. 383-393.

¹⁴ Johannsen, I, 441; Captain Crimson . . ., SJ, XII, Nos. 573-584 (March 5-May 21, 1881).

¹⁵ Cool Desmond; or, The Gambler's Big Game. A Romance of the Region of the Lawless, SJ, XI, Nos. 553-561 (October 16-December 11, 1880).

Further, hurried composition forced writers into relying upon only the broad strokes of story-telling. There was no time for attention to consistency nor for development of character or setting. Patten reminds us that authors had to use pen-names not only to prevent their over-exposure to the public, but also to disguise the great volume of tales they were producing, "as that would indicate hasty, and therefore careless work."¹⁶ But haste is always apparent in the story structure. For most characters serve only the functional purpose of keeping the plot in motion. Never does the author of a domestic novel, for example, probe the inner life of his distressed heroine. Whether the heroine is a shop girl or an actress, the reader can gain no insight into the particular and individual complexities of her existence. The street urchin is never seen, as in *Oliver Twist*, for example, in situations which reveal the exigencies of his station in life. The apprentice is never shown at his trade in the detail that would make clear to readers his duties, difficulties, and obligations. The detective does not investigate, but merely chases. The frontiersman's troubles in supporting his new existence in the West are not depicted with the depth that gives the reader an emotional understanding of his sufferings and hardships. Instead, these more significant aspects of individual human existence are glossed over melodramatically and romanticized so that the individual becomes merely a

¹⁶Patten, "Dime-Novel Days," Saturday Evening Post, CCIII (February 28, 1931), 126.

name, a label by means of which an author can make a simple reference to a stock predicament. For once a heroine's function is established, usually very early in the tale, a mere reference to the "unfortunate beauty" or to "poor Isabel" arouses all the connotations of evil and misfortune that are her lot.

The tales relied, therefore, on some novel effect to disguise the basic similarities of all story-paper novels. But to Bishop,¹⁷ a discriminating contemporary critic, the novels "are not ingenious, even, and ingenuity was perhaps to be their strong point." The attempts at novelty, as examples in earlier chapters have demonstrated, rely upon sensationalism or upon a local-color effect usually extraneous to the story itself. Many western tales, particularly the Dick Talbot stories, include at least one scene of a citizen's court, in which the hero is tried for a crime he did not commit. The scene is sustained by farcical humor which usually includes the antics of judge, prosecutor, witnesses, and biased jury, all of whom ignore due process of law. Other attempts at novelty relate unusual vicarious adventures. Accordingly, readers are treated to experiences not normally encountered in their urbanized and comparatively civilized life. Into this category fall descriptions of bloody encounters with Indians, the fabulous variety of escapes by which heroes extricate themselves from impending disaster, or minor episodes like one found in Joseph Badger's Equality Eph,¹⁸

¹⁷Bishop, op. cit., p. 384.

¹⁸Equality Eph, the Outlaw of Chaparral . . ., SJ, IX, Nos. 448-459 (October 12-December 28, 1878).

wherein the central figures witness an arena fight between an enraged bull and a grizzly bear. Still other attempts at novelty purport to acquaint the reader with unusual possibilities of life. In this approach, related to the Gothic novels of the eighteenth century, the reader is faced with apparently supernatural phenomena such as ghosts, phantom mazeppas, glowing faces, and resurrected bodies, but before the tales are over all are logically explained as clever deceptions or simply as misinterpreted natural events. In the same vein, the tales exploit unusual devices and characters that could only be labelled implausible unless explained, if not in the tale itself, at least by an editorial announcement. Thus, in a series of editorial comments, Aiken insists upon the actual existence of Dick Talbot.¹⁹ Thus, also, the publishers explain the apparently farfetched device of the carrier pigeon in The Winged Messenger, the tale I have used as the archetypal domestic novel. In the number of the Saturday Journal that carries the first installment of the tale, the "blurb" on the editorial page announces,

The part which a Carrier Dove herein plays is not, we may say, at all improbable. The use made of pigeons, during the siege of Paris, proves that their usefulness as message-bearers is not overstated by our author.²⁰

Now it is a natural practice of the story-telling art to mingle romance with reality. What Bishop and other critics validly object to, however, is apparently the literary failure of not defining

¹⁹SJ, VIII, No. 378 (June 9, 1877), 4; SJ, XI, No. 556 (November 6, 1880), 4; SJ, XI, No. 559 (November 27, 1880), 4. See pp. 137-138, supra.

²⁰SJ, III, No. 128 (August 24, 1872), 4. See pp. 66-69, supra.

clearly where sheer romance ends and reality begins. For Bishop, the "grand tissue of extravagances, inaneness, contradictions, and want of probable cause" removes all motivation from the tale and makes it sheer fancy.²¹ For Philip Rahv, the formularized novel is decidedly subliterate for much the same reasons Smith offers, namely that the work of the author of mass fiction

. . . is ridden by compulsions that depress the literary tradition, because they are compulsions of a kind that put a strain on literature, that literature more often than not can neither assimilate nor sublimate. He is the passive instead of the active agent of the Zeitgeist, he lives off it rather than through it, so that when his particular gifts happen to coincide with the mood of the times he seems modern and contemporary, but once the mood has passed he is in danger of being quickly discarded.²²

II. Story Papers as a Source of Cultural Study

Bishop and Benét agree that the most proper concern of the novel is social history and social criticism and that popular literature emphasizes these superficially if at all.²³ Had story-paper novels become social in their subject matter, however, they would necessarily have had to develop the very complexities of character and setting that they lacked. If story papers were to be

²¹Bishop, op. cit., pp. 384-385.

²²Philip Rahv, "Paleface and Redskin," Kenyon Review, I (Summer 1939), 254-255.

²³Bishop, op. cit., p. 388; Benét, op. cit., p. 501.

organs of social criticism, the novels necessarily would have had either to analyze social conditions and attitudes or make unanalytical value judgments carefully toned down to avoid offense to any large group of readers. Analysis, moreover, obliges the reader to remain intellectually alert as he reads, to be constantly critical of characters as personalities embodying an individual complex of beliefs, ideals, aspirations, prejudices, and desires. In short, had the content of the story-paper novel appealed to the analytical reader, its audience would have been limited to those willing to cope with the intellectual requirements of reading it.

Bishop recognized this limitation when he concluded that story-paper novels indulge in social criticism only very superficially because "a considerable part of their audience is unreflective. It has rather simple wants and aspirations. Lack of culture is a continuous childhood."²⁴

On the other hand, according to a correlative axiom, story papers, like other popular media, must avoid offending as wide a segment of the potential audience as possible. In deference, therefore, to the prejudices and sensibilities of the mass public, story papers avoid the touchy subjects of politics and religion, make only the most superficial references to racial matters, and follow a conservative policy concerning sexual morality.

²⁴Bishop, op. cit., p. 388. Italics in this quotation are mine.

The Beadle story papers avoid giving offense in political or religious matters by omitting from their pages any reference that might possibly be construed as partial, derogatory, or argumentative. Elected public officials are never spoken of as belonging to a particular party. If a hero, as in John Armstrong, Mechanic, runs for political office, it is on a "reform" ticket--the implication being not that the party is radical, but merely that it has at heart the interests of the common man, particularly the laborer.²⁵ Other government officials as they appear in the tales are merely functional, and the reader is never bothered with stories of political corruption. The general exception, and actually not a matter of politics, is the wild western community, where law and order depend on whether enough honest, strong men can manage to stay alive and hold the unscrupulous and dangerous citizens within some reasonable bounds. Politically, the most important character, though still fundamentally only functional, is the judge. But even in the western tale a judge's weakness results not from his being either corrupt or intimidated by a mob, but simply, and comically, from his ignorance of the practice of law.

The religious life of characters is either merely assumed or ignored. A church is merely a place in which a marriage is publicly legalized. Ministers are by implication non-sectarian. Even in the western tales, a mission padre is never referred to as a representative of the Roman Catholic Church. Religious conflicts

²⁵John Armstrong, Mechanic . . . , BeW, I, Nos. 1-12 (November 18, 1882-February 2, 1883).

as they apply to daily life are apparently too controversial and personal to be treated in mass literature.

As for racial problems, only in one tale by the ten authors studied in this dissertation does the racial-religious conflict play an integral part. Ingraham's Jule, the Jewess concerns a personal rivalry between Harold Lynde, a Christian, and Adolph Hugo, a Jew, which began in their college days and grew in succeeding years into hatred. A mutual friend, Merton Wilbur, a Christian, functions as a mediator. Several years after the enemies leave college to go their separate ways, Harold is accused of murder. Merton, now a prominent attorney, saves the innocent man, but not without the help of the hated Jew. The tale ends with a double intermarriage, Adolph marrying Harold's sister, Merton marrying Adolph's ward, Jule. Though Harold is forced to accept a Jewish brother-in-law, Ingraham as author does not make him shift his prejudice so much as to contract a marriage himself. At the end of the tale, however, Harold is tolerant enough to state a position that if unclear is at least uncontroversial: "'You can still hold your creed, be true to the God of Israel, and love your people.'"²⁶

This was as far as a story-paper author, it seems, dared to go. Usually the Jew is merely assigned, with unpleasant connotations, his traditional role of money lender. In this capacity he

²⁶Jule, the Jewess; or, the Miser Millionaire. A Story of Ill-Omened Lives, SJ, XII, Nos. 596-607 (August 13-October 29, 1881). Reprinted in BW, XV, Nos. 734-745 (December 5, 1896-February 20, 1897).

capitalizes on the financial misfortunes of sympathetic characters, or, if he is also a pawn broker, he acts as a cagey informant or fence who puts a high price on his advantageous position as a possible receiver of stolen goods. One example will suffice to indicate the general tenor of this function of the Jew. In Aiken's Old Sunflower, the Silent Smiter, John Flowers, the detective, seeks information about the criminal activities of scoundrels hired by the villain to harass the poor heroine, cheated out of her fortune, into a marriage with a man at least thirty years older than she. Three times in the tale Flowers refers to the Jew as "that descendant of the Chosen People, who runs the pawn shop up on the avenue."²⁷

The problem of the color line presents some different problems of treatment. The policy, again, is conservative. Chinese men appear almost exclusively in western tales in clearly subordinate roles as cooks, launderers, or errand boys. As functional secondary characters, the Chinese are never developed sufficiently to make them either sympathetic or villainous. They exist simply as individuals to be ignored, or, at best, used as tools. Their activities are, it seems, sufficiently unimportant morally, so that in Velvet Face, the Border Bravo Ingraham can, without fear of offending, permit the Chinese cook to indulge in profanity never uttered in other tales. It should, however, be noted once again that even in this

²⁷Old Sunflower, the Silent Smiter . . . , BW, X, Nos. 491-503 (April 9-July 2, 1892).

context "damn" is disguised as "damee." And the Chinese are apparently so insignificant that Ingraham could safely allow this same cook to marry the daughter of an Indian chief.²⁸

Indians, though "excluded," were treated more liberally. While in many western tales Indians appear as a savage mob to be destroyed lest they massacre the white man, there are several examples of the Indian as an individual personality. Many such examples, it is true, do not make the Indian more than a stock figure. But Dick Talbot has a faithful companion in Mud Turtle, who reappears intermittently throughout the series of tales. Mud Turtle seldom speaks, nor does Aiken so much as assign him to a tribe. But the broad strokes of characterization make of Mud Turtle a sympathetic, faithful, and courageous handyman. It is Mud Turtle who claims the body of the supposedly dead Talbot for burial; who acts as a mediator for Talbot in his relationship with Indian tribes; who follows silently the path of his master and saves him from the attacks of villains. Talbot himself, moreover, is permitted to become infatuated with Yuet-a, daughter of the Shasta chief. The Indian girl actually serves as a secondary heroine in Kentuck, the Sport.²⁹ The pretty Indian with her simple ways and entirely trusting disposition represents for Talbot all that is pure in a world of plotting, hatred, and murder. Perhaps it would have been too

²⁸Velvet Face, the Border Bravo . . . , SJ, XII, Nos. 582-593 (May 7-July 23, 1881).

²⁹Kentuck, the Sport . . . , SJ, V, Nos. 211-227 (March 28-July 18, 1874).

disturbing to sketch a scene of Talbot declaring his love for Yuet-a or of the two lovers kissing, for even the logical happy ending of the story is averted by the death of the Indian girl. Only once in the tales studied here is there an attempt to arouse true sympathy for the Indian. In Frederick Whittaker's Sitting Bull, the Red Monarch,³⁰ an Indian is for once a principal character. But even in this tale, it seems, sympathy with the Indians as a race is possible only after their defeat and submission. It is significant that such a tale does not appear until 1885, nine years after Little Big Horn, when Indians were generally confined to reservations and no longer considered a pressing military problem.

Negroes, like the Chinese, remained subordinate, functional characters. Never does a Beadle tale tackle the political and sociological problems of emancipation and integration. Only one tale approaches a "brotherhood" theme, and even that one does so condescendingly. The boy heroes of Charles Morris's The Daisy Detectives, though one is white and the other black, are united by a common plight. Both are indigent, orphaned street boys. When their efforts at detection lead to the rescue of an heiress kidnapped by a jealous suitor, both boys are rewarded by being sent to school. The tale ends with a condescending but didactic description of the feeling of Bob Butterworth, the white boy.

However many high-toned friends he may make, Bob will never forget nor disdain his ebony colored pard, and vows that if he lives to a [sic] thousand years

³⁰Sitting Bull, the Red Monarch . . . , BeW, III, Nos. 145-156 (August 22-November 7, 1885).

old, he will never turn his back on his old crony,
Sam Charcoal.³¹

If story papers could avoid political, religious, and racial controversy simply by keeping it covert, they had, nevertheless, to make some compromise about sexual love. For almost every tale turns upon some love conflict that is resolved eventually into a happy ending with the hero and heroine united in marriage.

William Wasserstrom, who has analyzed a number of sentimental short stories published in the Atlantic Monthly and Harper's Magazine during and after the 1850's, reached some conclusions which are interesting in the present context.³² In deference to the common-sense school of philosophy, early American literature recognized only two kinds of behavior, right and wrong. Moreover, novels dealing in rape, seduction, incest, and suicide attempt to teach the lesson of self-denial, namely that the wages of sin is death. In such stories the heroine is placed on a pedestal, for she is better than men and the reformer of them. According to Wasserstrom's analysis, a good woman embodies "a living victory of the spirit over the flesh."

Such didactic romance is opposed to a more realistic treatment of human life, for in these tales there is no middle ground between sexual denial and assertion, between fear and joy, between good and evil. Wasserstrom notices that after the Civil War a new heroine

³¹The Daisy Detectives; or, The White and Black Pards, BeW, III, Nos. 138-143 (July 4-August 8, 1885).

³²William Wasserstrom, "The Genteel Tradition and the Antipodes of Love," ELH, XXIII (December 1956), 299-316.

appears in the fiction he studies. She is at least implicitly a character in the middle ground, "neither an angel nor a devil but somehow she joins the benignity of the first with the piquancy of the second." This, it seems, is simply a way of saying that heroines began to assume an existence of the flesh as well as one of the spirit. Beadle story papers, from the first, recognized that heroines should have not only a pretty face and dainty feet, but also a decidedly feminine figure. Story-paper tales, likewise, permit heroines and their lovers certain indulgence in embraces and kisses, which though described as "passionate" are, nevertheless, as sexless as a light kiss on the forehead of a babe.

For the story papers still had public morals to consider. And the assumption, it seems, is that the heroine who willingly indulges in casual sexual love is unworthy of sympathy. On the other hand, a multiplicity of tales of seduction and rape surely tends to be offensive. Hence, story papers had to find some means of teaching the lesson of sexual self-denial without affronting a censorious audience.

The story-paper compromise is at best enigmatic. Rape and physical seduction are removed entirely from the possibilities of sexual life. Further, the heroine remains worthy of sympathy because she never plunges willingly into an immoral situation. She is rather the victim of a villain's deceit. She never becomes a mistress, only a wife. And lest it be suggested that the practice of villains' marrying their victims indicates a vestige of honor, let it be noted that the implication is clearly that virtuous

heroines are willing to settle for no less than a marriage ceremony, refusing to contract an improper liaison with a lover and render themselves, in the reader's mind, as base as the villains.

The preservation of a heroine's virtue by observing at least the external form of the marriage rite is also a device which further protects her from a sexual tragedy. For as a legal wife she is in the position quite properly to claim her rights as a wife. On the other hand, the heroine deceived by a mock marriage is a victim to be pitied. No matter which of these is a given maiden's problem, she remains on her pedestal as an image of sexual self-denial and moral probity.

That the compromise leads to some serious contradictions seems not to have worried story-paper writers and editors. Apparently there was a scale of sin, and according to the rules seduction was worse than forced or mock marriage, rape worse than simple abduction, molestation by Indian captors worse than simple captivity. Actually, the basic moral and social distinction leading to this outrageously romantic measure of sin and guilt is consistent with the tenor of popular literature as Wasserstrom describes it. The good woman is still the strongest moral force of society. As such, the heroines destined for a happy future live strictly within the bounds of moral integrity. Of course, this integrity is largely subjective. A mock marriage does not make a woman a wife. Legally she is no more than a paramour. The telling point is that she is not willingly so and would not live with her husband unless she sincerely believed her marriage valid. To solve the problem of

chastity for a woman in such a plight, story papers go a step further and usually provide the heroine with a reason for not submitting physically to a forced marriage union. Thus the heroine's physical integrity is preserved, and once released from her matrimonial tangle she is free to become the virgin bride of an honorable suitor.

Violence is quite another matter. For story papers indulge in descriptions bloody enough to register even upon readers used to violence. Bishop's criticism (1879) of story papers begins with several general and undocumented examples of juvenile delinquency--runaways, robberies, card playing, knife carrying, and even murder. All of these are attributed by the juveniles themselves or by Bishop to reading story papers. Bishop even belittles the didactic columns on the editorial pages as a salve "calculated to counteract . . . the unsettling influence" of the tales. Clearly the advice columns were intended to dictate an acceptable course of conduct. Bishop doubts, however, that the editorial pages succeeded in achieving the desired effect, for the stories themselves encourage boys in "sauciness, wisecracking, and slang." According to Bishop, teachers said that one out of every three boys read story papers and that these boy readers were the most difficult to handle.³³

Here again story papers were faced with the problem of straddling a moral issue. For though a story-paper novel always punishes

³³Bishop, op. cit., pp. 383-384.

vice and rewards virtue, the means used to achieve the end seem undesirable in themselves.

Generally, therefore, the story paper was the common mirror of its age. Morally the mass audience had little cause to be offended if it ignored the evils associated with the means by which justice and virtue are made to triumph. Furthermore, study of the story-paper novel indicates that as far as boy readers were concerned the mass audience was satisfied if youth was protected from literature about illicit love and successful crime. That the same tales tended to encourage brashness and even foolhardiness was not apparently considered very important. As for the audience in general, the story paper mirrored a common man's world, implicitly Christian though tolerant. It was a world in which honesty and respectability meant more than money, though money was the most fitting reward for perseverance in time of temptation. It was a world in which pure love was the apex of the man-woman relationship and simple unaffected brotherly love the basis of social contentment. It was, in other words, a fairy-tale world set in New York, California, or Nebraska. It was a world of chivalry, a world of the past and of fancy brought down to the present, stereotyped and formularized, so that the unhappy or disillusioned reader could always find vicarious surcease for his disappointments.

III. From Story Papers to Comic Books

By the turn of the century story papers were almost a thing of the past. True, the Family Story Paper lasted until 1921 and the Weekly until 1914. But the Banner Weekly died in 1897, and by 1903 the Ledger, Saturday Night, and the Fireside Companion joined the ranks of discontinued story papers.

If contemporary readers and critics tended to worry about the pernicious effect of story papers upon the impressionable minds of young boys, they had cause to rejoice when at the turn of the century the boys' market was swamped with a new brand of reading in the form of hard-cover novel series. The new tales were as crammed with adventure as those in the passé weeklies, but they were aimed also at the edification, instruction, and more wholesome activities of youth. A Beadle forerunner of this type of fiction is Whittaker's The Ice Elephant,³⁴ an adventure of three boys in the arctic wastes in the vicinity of the Behring straits. The boys are members of an expedition searching for a treasure of mastodon ivory believed to be frozen and preserved in the glaciers. The tale depends on no themes of violence or crime. Instead, the boys face the dangers of nature in their quest for the treasure. They endure famine, narrowly escape avalanches, and survive the eruptions of volcanoes. In the end they discover not only dozens of frozen

³⁴The Ice Elephant; or, The Castaways of the Lone Coast. A Story of Three Boys in the Frozen North, BW, XV, Nos. 751-756 (April 3-May 8, 1897).

mastodons, but also an aged hermit, the long-lost uncle of one of the young explorers.

The new series of novels were largely the product of Edward Stratemeyer and the syndicate he formed to mass-produce the tales. Stratemeyer began his career as a writer of dime novels. Though his work for Beadle and Adams was confined to the "Boys' Library of Sport," this early experience qualified him perfectly for his new enterprise. Under his own name and under pseudonyms, which included Captain Ralph Bonehill, Arthur M. Winfield, and Victor Appleton, Stratemeyer began in 1898 a publishing career that was to continue without interruption until his death in 1930.³⁵ His books furnished boys with historical and biographical novels and instructive adventure tales. Listed below are seventeen series for which the Stratemeyer syndicate was responsible.

"The American Boys' Biographical Series": popularized biographies of famous figures in American history.

"The Colonial Series": novels of boys' adventures in American colonial times.

"The Flag of Freedom Series": tales of the Revolutionary War.

"The Mexican War Series": historical novels of young soldiers in the War of 1848.

"Soldiers of Fortune Series": tales of military life.

"The Old Glory Series": military tales of American youth in the service of their country.

³⁵For biographical data, see Johannsen, II, 264-265.

"The Working Upward Series": stories of successful rises in business and factory life.

"The Bound to Win Series": tales of young American sportsmen and their adventures in football and baseball.

"The Lakeport Series": the schooltime and vacation adventures of high school chums.

"The Ship and Shore Series": novels of a group of sailing comrades.

"The Pan-American Series": novels of young American engineers in Mexico and South America.

"The Boy Hunter Series": adventures of young boys on hunting expeditions.

"The Movie Boys Series": tales of cameramen on location in all parts of the world.

"The Don Sturdy Series": adventures of a young big-game hunter.

"The Putnam Hall Series": life in a military secondary school; a companion series to "The Rover Boys Series."

"The Rover Boys Series": tales of school life, exploration, and maturity in business.

"The Tom Swift Series": stories of a young inventor whose products are far ahead of his times.

The most popular of these series were the Rover Boys and the Tom Swift tales. Both series began in 1898, and eventually there were thirty Rover Boys novels and thirty-seven Tom Swift tales, all of which remained in print until 1936. The Rover brothers

and Tom Swift are typical Stratemeyer heroes. They are well educated, industrious, adventurous but not foolhardy, wealthy enough to undertake their various travels and experiments, and under all circumstances courteous, chivalrous, respectful, honest and courageous.

Currently the boys' market is still supplied with reflections of the Stratemeyer product. Stratemeyer's publisher, Grosset & Dunlap of New York, has been selling steadily since 1928 "The Hardy Boys Series," which by January, 1959, numbered thirty-six volumes. The two Hardy brothers, sons of a famous private detective, build reputations of their own as amateur sleuths and travel throughout the world bringing criminals to justice. A comparatively recent enterprise is the inception of a "Tom Swift, Jr. Series," tales of a contemporary young inventor who puts his genius to work in a world of atoms, rockets, space ships, and satellites.

If such series of boys' literature provide the young teen-ager with high level of reading compared to story-paper fiction, there is also a corresponding low level of sub-literature. The comic book is perhaps the most direct descendant of the old dime novel and story-paper crime novel. Although never pandering to the triumph of evil, this comic literature, which deserves a full treatment in a separate study,³⁶ offers a young reader the same combination of thrills, brutality, romance, adventure, and justice that the story papers gave his grandfather.

³⁶Geoffrey Wagner has discussed comic books in detail in Parade of Pleasure, pp. 71-114.

But there has also been a shift in moral emphasis in popular literature. Limiting our discussion here to the topics of the Beadle tales, we can distinguish a contemporary concentration upon the true confession novel as an emphasis on the factual and historical. Crime stories have become factual accounts of real cases. Love stories have become personal documents. But perhaps the most amazing shift has been in the western tale. Of course, the comics, motion pictures, and television plays still extol the romantic past of the West. Heroes are still utter gentlemen, knights in buckskin, saving and enchanting beautiful heroines in distress. But the trend toward authenticity has brought to the market a new type of publication which purports to debunk the romance of the past and to present the West as it really was. Typical of such publications is a quarterly called Real West (1956- to date) which presents "true," but undocumented, accounts calculated to shock readers into a state of awareness. Among the articles, for example, in the February, 1959, issue of Real West is "The Sex Horror of Josephine Meeker," a tale, recorded "in the official documents in the War Department," of the sexual atrocities undergone by a young missionary teacher captured by the Utes.³⁷ In the same number is an account of the death of Doc Holiday from tuberculosis and a biographical sketch of Tom Bell, a road agent who terrorized the California stage trails during the 1850's.³⁸

³⁷Real West, II (February 1959), pp. 8-10, 61-62.

³⁸Ibid., "How Doc Holiday Died," pp. 11, 51-53, and "Tom Bell, Greatest of Road Agents," pp. 32-33, 48-51.

No one can say the spirit of the story papers is dead. They are as much a part of current popular literature as they are a segment of our literary and cultural history. William Rose Benét, Margaret MacMullen and others have indicated that the practices of popular literature do not change, that the formulas remain intact for each succeeding generation to apply again to its own reading.³⁹ Story papers died with their generations of readers. The new crop of young readers found a new outlet for their curiosity. To them who have both comic book and the latest Hardy Boys volume at their elbow, the words "dime novel" and "story paper" refer, if they arouse any meaning at all, to some distant past, some objectionable thrill literature. Little do they realize that they are being thrilled today by the same means that thrilled their fathers and grandfathers before them.

³⁹ Henry Morton Robinson makes a similar generalization. The title of his article speaks for itself: "The Dime Novel Is Dead, but the Same Old Hungers Are Still Fed," Century Magazine, CXVI (May 1928), 60-67.

APPENDIX A

CIRCULATION FIGURES OF SELECTED STORY PAPERS AND OTHER WEEKLIES, 1870 - 1900

. . . no weekly paper ever started in America attained, in so brief a time, so large a circulation. In the trade it is a favorite, while to the large class who are its regular readers, it is the Weekly par excellence, if we are to judge by the expressions made, as well as by the steadily and rapidly increasing circulation. The JOURNAL is destined to exert an important influence, both in developing American talent, and in raising the standard of our home literature, thus achieving for our periodical popular press what the Dime Books have achieved for cheap publications.

- Saturday Journal, III, No.
123 (July 20, 1872), 4.

Pinning down circulation figures of periodicals published before 1900 becomes more difficult as we become further removed from that period, for aside from the usually inflated claims publishers flaunted in their own periodicals, the only figures available to modern researches are found in the several contemporary annual directories of newspapers and periodicals. But today the old directories are hard to come by. Even the larger libraries, including the Library of Congress, have only spotty collections. Some libraries, furthermore, apparently consider a file of such directories relatively unimportant: in reply to my inquiry the Cincinnati Public Library stated that "in 1925 all our Rowell and Remington newspaper directories were discarded . . ."

The major directories used in gathering the figures offered in the accompanying charts were: Rowell's American Newspaper Directory, New York, 1869-1908; N. W. Ayer and Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals, Philadelphia, 1880-to date; Edwin Alden and Bro.'s American Newspaper Catalogue, Cincinnati, 1877-1911; Remington Brothers' Newspaper Manual, New York, 1887-1912; Pettingill's Newspaper Directory for 1878, New York, 1878; C. A. Cook & Co., United States Newspaper Directory, New York, 1881; and the Eureka Newspaper Guide, Binghamton, N. Y., 1894.

Endeavoring to check as many of the directories published between 1870 and 1900 as possible, I consulted the following libraries: the Library of Congress; the Free Library, the Historical Society of

Pennsylvania, and the University of Pennsylvania Library, Philadelphia; Newberry Library and the Chicago Historical Society, Chicago; the Cleveland Public Library, the Western Reserve University Library, and the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland; the Grosvenor Reference Division of the Buffalo Public Library; the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio and the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Cincinnati; and the Ohio State University Library, Columbus.

The investigation netted complete sets of figures from the Rowell annuals--the only directory published throughout the span covered in this appendix--and from the Ayer annuals from 1880 to 1900. Alden directories were available to me only for 1882 to 1886 inclusive, Remington directories only for 1893 to 1896 and 1898.

Even when all the figures are collected, one wonders just how much solid information he has. Frank L. Mott in his study of American magazines has indicated the difficulties an editor of a periodical directory faced in assigning figures to given publications for the years prior to the establishment of the Audit Bureau of Circulations. Not only were publishers reluctant to commit themselves to an accurate figure, but, if they released figures at all, they made their statements look better than the facts.¹ They had, indeed, the best reason for such practice. For the annuals were published for the benefit of advertisers who used them to ascertain the quality and quantity of the reading public

¹Mott, A History of American Magazines, III, 6; IV, 16.

the potential advertising medium addressed. The very nature of the annuals, furthermore, presents a difficulty beyond that of misleading statements. For if a given periodical, such as the Ledger or Banner Weekly, did not carry advertising, the directory dismissed circulation figures as unimportant. No figures are available, therefore, for the Banner Weekly in the nineties or for the Ledger in the years when it led all other story papers.

Rowell attempted to eliminate as much confusion as possible by giving circulation figures in terms of categories rather than exact numbers. Thus a magazine might be settled comfortably in a wide division like "exceeding 20,000 but not more than 40,000." Rowell, moreover, refused after 1879 to quote figures beyond a certain top limit. From 1879 to 1885 the highest Rowell rating was "above 100,000"; between 1885 and 1891 "above 150,000"; between 1892 and 1900 "above 75,000." He was sure enough of his classifications to offer damages to any publisher who proved that Rowell's figures were false. Though libel suits against Rowell were common, he seldom had to pay damages and most often found it unnecessary even to answer the charges.² If no figures were made available to him or if no close estimate was possible, Rowell assigned as low a classification as he thought just. Such practice led to wide discrepancies between figures in Rowell's annuals and those listed by other firms. Among the noticeable disagreements in the charts, for example, is the Rowell estimate of the Boston Budget circulation

²George Presbury Rowell, Forty Years an Advertising Agent, 1865-1905 (New York, 1906), pp. 163-167.

for 1897. The "2200 to 4000" category in Rowell's and the 19,000 figure in Ayer's each tends to weaken the validity of the other.

At best the figures in the following charts have only a relative significance. They are offered for no more than that. But even granting this relativity, it is quite apparent that the Beadle story papers lagged far behind their competitors and that the Beadle and Adams pre-eminence as dime novel publishers cannot be assumed in the field of the story paper. Regardless of claims to excellence Beadle weeklies ran a poor last to other story papers published in New York and Philadelphia.

I have selected, in addition to the important story papers, two other representative weeklies against which to compare story paper circulations. Harper's Weekly represents the popular literary and political illustrated weekly and Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper the family pictorial news weekly.

Figures are given in thousands. If a directory omits figures, no comment is made in the charts. Following are the symbols used to represent the various directories (listed in order of appearance in the charts).

- R - Rowell's American Newspaper Directory
- P - Pettingill's Newspaper Directory for 1878
- A - N. W. Ayer and Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals
- C - C. A. Cook & Co., United States Newspaper Directory
- L - Edwin Alden and Bro.'s American Newspaper Catalogue
- M - Remington Brothers' Newspaper Manual
- E - Eureka Newspaper Guide

Table I. Circulation Figures, 1870-1873

	<u>1870</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1872</u>	<u>1873</u>
<u>Am. Monthly</u>		35 R	50 R	40 R
<u>Am. Quarterly</u>	95 R	95 R	125 R	
<u>Am. Semi-Monthly</u>	85 R	88 R	88 R	72 R
<u>Am. Monthly</u>	150 R	200 R	220 R	175 R
<u>Am. Quarterly</u>	300 R	300 R	300 R	200 R
<u>Am. Semi-Monthly</u>	70 R	77 R	77 R	82.2 R
<u>Am. Monthly</u>	100 R	100 R	150 R	145 R

Table 2. Circulation Figures, 1874-1877

	<u>1874</u>	<u>1875</u>	<u>1876</u>	<u>1877</u>
<u>San Francisco Journal</u>	30 R	25 R	27 R	28 R 30 P
<u>San Francisco Chronicle</u>	50 R	36 R	30 R	25 R
<u>San Francisco Herald</u>		100 R	80 R	150 R
<u>San Francisco Examiner</u>	200 R	180 R	175 R	175 R
<u>San Francisco Illustrated</u>	40 R	50 R	40 R	50 R
<u>San Francisco Post</u>	105 R	100 R	80 R	115 R 120 P

Table 3. Circulation Figures, 1878-1881

	1878	1879	1880	1881
General Circulation	25 R 50 P	25-50 R 50 A	25-50 R 50 A	25-50 R 50 A 50 C
Children's Circulation	25 R	5-10 R 10-2 A	5-10 R 10-2 A	5-10 R 5 A 5 C
Adults' Circulation	60 R	20-25 R 18-3 A	20-25 R 18-3 A	20-25 R 18-3 A
Light	150 R	100+ R 150 A	100+ R 150 A	100+ R 150 A 175 C
Illustrated	170 R	100+ R	100+ R 200 A	100+ R 200 A 200 C
Monthly	115 R 120 P	100+ R	25-50 R 33-4 A	25 R 33-4 A 35 C
				100 R 120 A 120 C

Table 4. Circulation Figures, 1882-1885

	1882	1883	1884	1885
<u>British Library</u>	15-20 R 20 A 20.5 L	10 L	20 R 10 L	20 R 10 L
<u>British Library</u>	5-10 R 6 A 9 L	5-10 R 6 A 9 L	15+ R 9 L	19.7 A 19.7 L
<u>British Library</u>				100+ R 100 L
<u>British Library</u>	100+ R 165 L	100+ R 250 A 230 L	100+ R 275 A 275 L	100+ R 280 A 275 L
<u>British Library</u>	20-25 R 18.8 A 25 L	20-25 R 18 A 25 L	25 R 25 A 26 L	25 R
<u>British Library</u>		20-25 R 60 A	50 R 60 A 50 L	50+ R 60 A 57 L
<u>British Library</u>	100+ R 150 A 150 L	100+ R 150 A 150 L	100+ R 150 A 150 L	100+ R 150 A 150 L
<u>British Library</u>	100+ R 200 A 175 L	100+ R 200 A 200 L	100+ R 200 A	100+ R 200 A 200 L
<u>British Library</u>	20-25 R 43.4 A 43 L	20-25 R 45 A 45 L	20-25 R 45 A 45 L	25-50 R 50 A 45 L
<u>British Library</u>	100 R 120 A 100 L	100+ R 120 A 100 L	100+ R 120 A 100 L	100 R 100 L

Table 5. Circulation Figures, 1886-1889

	<u>1886</u>	<u>1887</u>	<u>1888</u>	<u>1889</u>
<u>Harper Weekly</u>	15-17.5 R 10 L	10-12.5 R	7.5-10 R	10+ R
<u>Poston Post</u>	19 A 19 L	7.5-10 R 19 A	5-7.5 R 16.5 A	4+ R 20 A
<u>Family Story Paper</u>	150+ R 100 L	150+ R	150+ R	150+ R 150 A
<u>Pittsfield Commonwealth</u>	150+ R 250 A 275 L	150+ R	150+ R	150+ R
<u>Golden Days</u>	75-100 R 60 A 87 L	75-100 R 115 A	75-100 R 112 A	75+ R 113 A
<u>Saturday Night</u>	100-150 R 150 A 150 L	100-150 R 125 A	100-150 R 125 A	100+ R 115 A
<u>Weekly</u>	100-150 R 200 A 200 L	100-150 R 200 A	100-150 R 200 A	100+ R 200 A
<u>Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper</u>	25-37.5 R 45 A 50 L	25-37.5 R 45 A	37.5-50 R 45 A	37.5 R 45 A
<u>Harper's Weekly</u>	75-100 R 100 A 100 L	75-100 R 100 A	75-100 R 100 A	75+ R 100 A

Table 6. Circulation Figures, 1890-1893

	1890	1891	1892	1893
<u>Brooklyn Evening Post</u>	4-5 R 19.2 A	4-5 R 18.5 A	2-2-4 R	4-7.5 R
<u>Brooklyn Daily Press</u>	150+ R	150+ R	75+ R 150 A	75+ R 150 A 150 M
<u>Brooklyn Freeman</u>	150+ R	150+ R	75+ R 200 A	75+ R 150 A 220 M
<u>Selden Press</u>	75-100 R 110 A	100-150 R 110 A	75+ R 115 A	75+ R 115 A 115 M
<u>Selden News</u>	37.5-50 R	37.5-50 R	20-40 R 42 A	20-40 R 42 A 43 M
<u>Leader</u>	100-150 R	75-100 R	75+ R 100 A	75+ R 100 A 200 M
<u>Saturday Night</u>	100-150 R 115 A	100-150 R 115 A	75+ R 100 A	75+ R 100 A 110 M
<u>Weekly</u>	100-150 R 200 A	100-150 R 200 A	250 A	200 A 200 M
<u>Frank Leslie's Illustrated News</u>	37.5-50 R 67 A	37.5-50 R 65 A	20-40 R 70 A	40-75 R 65 A 72 M
<u>Warner's Weekly</u>	75-100 R 85 A	75-100 R 85 A	40-75 R 85 A	75+ R 85 A 90 M

Table 7. Circulation Figures, 1894-1897

	1894	1895	1896	1897
General	2,244 R 1,000 A 1,244 E	2,244 R 1,000 A 1,244 E	2,244 R 1,000 A 1,244 E	2,244 R 1,000 A 1,244 E
Children	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Adults	75+ R 100 A 100 E	75+ R 100 A 100 E	75+ R 100 A 100 E	75+ R 100 A 100 E
Books	20-40 R 100 A 100 E	20-40 R 100 A 100 E	20-40 R 100 A 100 E	20-40 R 100 A 100 E
Periodicals	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Illustrated	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Unillustrated	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Books	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Periodicals	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Illustrated	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Unillustrated	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Books	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Periodicals	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Illustrated	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E
Unillustrated	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E	10-75 R 100 A 100 E

Table 8. Circulation Figures, 1898-1900

	<u>1898</u>	<u>1899</u>	<u>1900</u>
<u>Boston Budget</u>	1-2.2 R 19 A 18.5 M	1-2.2 R 19 A	1-2.2 R 19.1 A
<u>Family Story Paper</u>	40-75 R	40-75 R	40-75 R
<u>Fireaside Companion</u>	40-75 R 150 A 150 M	40-75 R 150 A	40-75 R 150 A
<u>Golden Days</u>	20-40 R 75 A 100 M	17.5-20 R 75 A	20-40 R 75 A
<u>Golden Hours</u>	17.5-20 R 106.7 A 105 M	17.5-20 R 106.7 A	17.5-20 R 106.7 A
<u>Ledger</u>	100 A 200 M	100 A	164.8 A
<u>Saturday Night</u>	40-75 R 100 A 100 M	20-40 R 100 A	40-75 R 100 A
<u>Weekly</u>	200 A 200 M	200 A	200 A
<u>Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper</u>	17.5-20 R 40 A 65 M	17.5-20 R 60 A	17.5-20 R 95 A
<u>Harper's Weekly</u>	20-40 R 80 A	20-40 R 80 A	20-40 R 80 A

APPENDIX B

THE KIT BANDY TALES

BY OLL COOMES

. . . Mountain Detective, prize fraud,
and diplomaed liar.

- Kit Bandy in Red Ruin; or,
The Young Whirlwind of the
Hills, Banner Weekly, VII,
Nos. 329-335 (March 2-April
13, 1889).

The Kit Bandy tales were all reprinted at least once in Beadle and Adams' "Dime Library," "Half-Dime Library," or "Popular Library." Titles and numbers of the reissues may be located by reference to Johannsen's bibliographies of the Saturday Journal and the Banner Weekly. All the tales appeared originally in the story papers, and they are listed here in order of appearance.

Silver Star, the Boy Knight. A Prairie Romance, SJ, VIII, No. 410-IX, No. 420 (January 19-March 30, 1878).

Little Texas, the Young Mustanger. A Tale of the Texan Prairies, SJ, X, Nos. 494-503 (August 30-November 1, 1879).

Baby Sam, the Boy Giant of the Yellowstone; or, Old Spokane Joe's Trust. A Romance of "Wonderland," BeW, I, No. 48-II, No. 54 (October 13-November 24, 1883).

Little Buckskin, the Young Prairie Centaur; or, Old Kit Bandy, the Border Sleuth, BeW, II, Nos. 67-72 (February 23-March 29, 1884).

Laramie Joe, the Boy Knight of the Plains; or, The Mystery of the Miner's Camp, BeW, II, No. 99-III, No. 103 (October 4-November 1, 1884).

The Border Sleuths; or, Kit Bandy and his Chums, BeW, III, Nos. 122-131 (March 14-May 16, 1885).

Banner Ben, the Wildfire of the Prairie; or, Old Kit Bandy's Compound Campaign, BW, IV, Nos. 165-170 (January 9-February 13, 1886).

Ajax, the Infant Giant; or, Kit Bandy Outwitted, BW, VI, Nos. 266-272 (December 17, 1887-January 28, 1888).

Kit Bandy in Red Ruin; or, The Young Whirlwind of the Hills, BW, VII, Nos. 329-335 (March 2-April 13, 1889).

Saddle-King Sam, Old Kit's Adjutant; or, The Big Rustle on the P. V. L. Ranch. A Romance of the Little Missouri, BW, VII, Nos. 343-348 (June 8-July 13, 1889).

Coeur D'Alene Dan, the Mountain Guide; or, Old Kit Bandy's Black-Hawk Brigade. A Story of the Pan Handle of Idaho, BW, VIII, Nos. 377-382 (February 1-March 8, 1890).

Kit Bandy's Brigade in Arizona; or, The Nabob Vagabond's Friends in Need, BW, IX, Nos. 453-460 (July 18-September 5, 1891).

Kit Bandy's "Star" Engagement; or, Desert Sam, the Saddle Prince of the Rio Hondo. A Romance of New Mexico, BW, IX, No. 464-X, No. 470 (October 3-November 14, 1891).

Old Kit Bandy's Compromise; or, Little Jove, the Young Thunderbolt. The Story of the Secret of Dismal Desert, BW, X, Nos. 505-510 (July 16-August 20, 1892).

Kit Bandy's Big Six; or, The Rustlers of Jackson Basin. A Story of the Rosebud Ranch Rangers, BW, XIII, Nos. 651-656 (May 4-June 8, 1895).

APPENDIX C

THE DICK TALBOT TALES

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN

. . . quick as lightning on the trigger,
spry as a cat with a bowie-knife; the
best two-handed sparrer that ever set
foot in the Reese river valley, and the
finest poker-player that ever handled a
deck of cards.

- Overland Kit; or, The Idyl
of White Pine, Saturday
Journal, II, Nos. 68-82
(July 1-October 7, 1871).

The Dick Talbot tales were all reprinted at least once in Beadle and Adams' "Dime Library" or "Twenty Cent Novels" series. Titles and numbers of the reissues may be located by reference to Johannsen's bibliographies of the Saturday Journal and the Banner Weekly. All the tales appeared originally in the story papers, and they are listed here in order of appearance.

Overland Kit; or, The Idyl of White Pine, SJ, II, Nos. 68-82 (July 1-October 7, 1871). Also SJ, VI, Nos. 264-281.

Rocky Mountain Rob, the California Outlaw; or, The Vigilantes of the Humbug Bar, SJ, III, No. 152-IV, No. 167 (February 8-May 24, 1873).

Kentuck, the Sport; or, Dick Talbot at the Mines, SJ, V, Nos. 211-227 (March 28-July 18, 1874).

Injun Dick; or, The Death Shot of Shasta, SJ, V, No. 245-VI, No. 264 (November 21, 1874-April 3, 1875).

The Velvet Hand; or, The Iron Grip of Injun Dick. A Wild Story of the Cinnabar Mines, SJ, VIII, Nos. 380-393 (June 23-September 22, 1877).

Gold Dan; or, The White Savages of the Great Salt Lake. A Terrible Tale of the Danites of Mormon Land, SJ, VIII, Nos. 400-411 (November 10, 1877-January 26, 1878).

Captain Dick Talbot, King of the Road; or, The Black-Hoods of Shasta, SJ, X, Nos. 481-495 (May 31-September 6, 1879).¹

¹Johannsen, I, 438, errs in assigning the final installment of this tale to No. 485 (June 28, 1879).

Richard Talbot of Cinnabar; or, The Brothers of the Red Hand. A Strange Tale of a Lonely Californian Camp and the Rude Mortals who Dwelt Therein, SJ, XI, Nos. 530-544 (May 8-August 14, 1880).

Lion-Hearted Dick; or, The Gentleman Road-Agent. A Wild Tale of California Adventure, BeW, I, Nos. 3-14 (December 2, 1882-February 17, 1883).²

Red Richard; or, The Brand of the Crimson Cross. A Romance of California Mining Life, BeW, I, Nos. 23-33 (April 21-June 30, 1883).

Dick Talbot in New York; or, Tracked from the Mountains to the Metropolis, BeW, II, Nos. 92-103 (August 16-November 1, 1884).

N. B.: This is also a Joe Phenix detective story.

Dick Talbot in No-Man's Camp, BW, V, No. 255-VI, No. 268 (October 1-December 31, 1887).

The Cohort of Five; or, Dick Talbot's Great Clean-Out, The Romance of a Just Vengeance, BW, VI, Nos. 267-279 (December 24, 1887-March 17, 1888).

Talbot, the Ranch King; or, The Double Foe. A Romance of the Hawks of Cababi, BW, VI, Nos. 288-300 (May 19-August 11, 1888).

Dick Buckskin, the Man of Mettle; or, Talbot in in Apache-Land, BW, VI, No. 306-VII, No. 317 (September 22-December 8, 1888).

Talbot in Arms; or, The Ranch King at Bay. A Sequel to the "Ranch King," BW, VII, Nos. 321-333 (January 5-March 30, 1889).

²Johannsen, I, 444, errs in assigning the first installment to No. 2.

APPENDIX D

THE JOE PHENIX TALES

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN

No man was more fearless of all danger, more crafty in devices, or more successful in penetrating the plans of, and capturing rascals of all grades, from the highest to the lowest.

- The Doctor from Texas; or, Joe Phenix's Shadow Clue. The Revelations of the Haver-sham Case, Banner Weekly, XI, Nos. 541-553 (March 25-June 17, 1893).

Eleven Joe Phenix detective stories were published originally in the Beadle story papers. All were reprinted at least once in the "Dime Library." These eleven items are listed in part A of this appendix in order of their publication. Johannsen's cross references list the reprintings. Thirteen more Joe Phenix stories were published only in the "Dime Library" (DL). Part B lists these thirteen items in order of their publication.

A. Tales Published Originally
in the Story Papers

Joe Phenix, the Police Spy, SJ, IX, Nos. 420-434 (March 30-July 6, 1878).

Joe Phenix, Private Detective; or, The League of the Skeleton Keys. A Most Unnatural, Improbable Story, etc., SJ, XI, Nos. 541-553 (July 24-October 16, 1880).

The Wolves of New York; or, Joe Phenix's Great Man Hunt, SJ, XII, Nos. 585-596 (May 28-August 13, 1881).

The Bat of the Battery; or, Joe Phenix, King of Detectives. A Thrilling Story of New York Life by Day and Night, BeW, I, Nos. 13-25 (February 10-May 5, 1883).

Dick Talbot in New York; or, Tracked from the Mountains to the Metropolis, BeW, II, Nos. 92-103 (August 16-November 1, 1884).

The Man of Three; or, Playing for Five Millions, BW, V, Nos. 232-243 (April 23-July 9, 1887).

The Doctor from Texas; or, Joe Phenix's Shadow Clue. The Revelations of the Haversham Case, BW, XI, Nos. 541-553 (March 25-June 17, 1893).¹

The Fifth Avenue Police Spy; or, Joe Phenix's Right Bower, BW, XI, 553-565 (June 17-September 9, 1893).

¹Johannsen, I, 462, errs in assigning the last installment to XI, No. 550 (May 27, 1893).

The Serio-Comic Detective; or, Joe Phenix in Chicago, BW, XI, No. 569-XII, No. 581 (October 7-December 30, 1893).

The Diamond Dagger; or, Joe Phenix's Double Deal. A Story of the Queen City of the Ohio, BW, XII, Nos. 579-592 (December 16, 1893-March 17, 1894).

Joe Phenix's Mascot; or, The Gentleman Crook's Decoy. A Story of Detective Transformations, BW, XII, Nos. 591-602 (March 10-May 26, 1894).

B. Tales Published Originally
in the "Dime Library"

Joe Phenix's Shadow; or, The Great Detective's Mysterious Monitor. A Romance of the Seen and Unseen, DL, No. 601 (April 30, 1890).

Joe Phenix's Silent Six; or, The Great Detective's Shadow Guard, DL, No. 620 (September 10, 1890).

Joe Phenix's Combine; or, The Dandy Conspirator, DL, No. 628 (November 5, 1890).

Joe Phenix's Master Search; or, The Casket of Ill Omen. A Romance of City and Camp, DL, No. 632 (December 3, 1890).

Joe Phenix in Crazy Camp; or, The Great Detective's Long Chase. A Romance of the Little Colorado, DL, No. 637 (January 7, 1891).

Joe Phenix's Specials; or, The Actress Detective's Double Victory. A Romance of the Unknown Dead, DL, No. 681 (November 11, 1891).

Joe Phenix's Unknown; or, Crushing the Crook Combination. A Shady Side Romance of the Great City, DL, No. 700 (March 23, 1892).

Joe Phenix's Siren; or, The Woman Hawkshaw. A City Revelation, DL, No. 708 (May 18, 1892).

Joe Phenix's Mad Case; or, The Doomed Syndicate, DL, No. 745 (February 1, 1893).

Joe Phenix's Big Bulge; or, The Cracksman Baron in New York, DL, No. 749 (March 1, 1893).

Joe Phenix's Lone Hand; or, Working a Curious Clue. The Romance of the Millionaire Brewer's Heritage, DL, No. 760 (May 17, 1893).

The New York Sport at Long Branch; or, Blocking the Burlesque Actress's Game. A Romance of the Great Metropolis, DL, No. 799 (February 14, 1894).

The Female Barber Detective; or, Joe Phenix in Silver City, DL, No. 865 (May 22, 1895).

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We do not sow the streets with half-sheets, nor plaster fences over with "stunning" posters of a "stunning" story; other papers can do that . . . We simply ask every friend of this weekly to speak that good word for it to their friends, which they think it merits.

- Banner Weekly, V, No.
209 (November 13, 1886), 4.

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Beadle's Weekly. I-III, Nos. 1-156 (November 18, 1882-November 7, 1885).

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Cobb, Ella Waite. A Memoir of Sylvanus Cobb, Jr. Boston, 1891.

Cobb, Irvin S. "A Plea for Old Cap Collier," Irvin Cobb at His Best. New York, 1929. Pp. 163-195.

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I, Louis George Pecek, was born in Euclid, Ohio, October 6, 1931. I received my secondary school education at St. Ignatius High School of Cleveland, Ohio, and my undergraduate training at The College of the Holy Cross, which granted me the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1953. From John Carroll University, I received the Master of Arts degree in 1955. While in residence there, I was a Lecturer in the Department of English during the year 1954-1955. In September, 1955, I was appointed Graduate Assistant in the Department of English for four years while completing the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.